WORLD REVIEW

Incorporating Review of Reviews May 1950

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CORRESPONDENCE

'OXFORD AND GERMANY'

SIR,

If an obscure don may enter the lists against a famous poet, may I utter a mild protest against Mr. Stephen Spender's dicta about Oxford, in your April issue? The ancient universities—like their modern fellows—have been riding high on the inflationary tide, but there may be hard times ahead, and the Universities will need all the friends they can get. Mr. Spender's article is not likely to help them.

Only those whose development is arrested can really hope to look back upon their student years wholly without regret. One is bound to feel that time was wasted and opportunities lost. For myself, belonging to a slightly younger generation than Mr. Spender—my undergraduate years began in 1932—I can honestly say that, looking back, I do not believe the fault was Oxford's. Perhaps the Oxford of the post-depression years was less riddled with the vices of exclusiveness and unreality than that which Mr. Spender remembers; perhaps he was unfortunate in his college or his choice of activities. But as I remember Oxford as an undergraduate, I remember something almost precisely the opposite—an infinite gradation of different types of human being, an endless procession of opportunities for receiving intellectual stimulation and for self-expression, and a sense of infinite possibilities for myself and my friends.

I can only blush now for some aspects of our innocence—our naïve pacifism, our naïve socialism. But if pacifism and socialism were both illusions, they were generous illusions and contributed an experience which may help us to temper the 'realism' into which we have grown up. My regrets are not for what the University isolated me from; but rather for failing to take some things that it could have given—quiet things—for the sake of forays along paths that might lead to the outer world which I was sometimes tempted, like Mr. Spender, to equate with reality. I believe now that I under-appreciated the full

possibilities presented by belonging to a learned community—one of the few the modern world has left. There is nothing unreal about scholarship. But when I look back on the formal teaching of the University, it is still with deep gratitude. Perhaps the historians were wiser than the philosophers. That I don't know. But I should be surprised if all Mr. Spender's friends got so little from the University as he claims to have. No doubt this is just as personal a view as Mr. Spender's. My only ground for believing it a true one is the fact that fifteen years later it is still a thrill to walk into a room and meet one of the friends who shared those years with me and to remember with them many things. The greatest bonds between people are those of shared experience; I cannot believe that the experiences we shared were as empty and unreal as Mr. Spender believes. I have no reason for thinking that my pupils find Oxford a disappointment; I hope my sons will not when the time comes.

Yours, etc.

MAX BELOFF

Oxford

REVIEWING

SIR,

With a limited number of regular critics receiving, in the various national journals, a large number of books, it is essential that these critics, if they are to fulfil a useful task, should be men possessing the power of achieving conscious distance towards all the books they review, and able to formulate an analytical opinion that sees into the centre of the book. There should be an overcoming of the narrow confines of the self so that the critic allows himself to be opened-up by the book. With so large a number of books to choose from, it is necessary for the critic to possess fingertips for the right book, the book of real importance, otherwise, unable to distinguish and having failed to find a book that really deserves to be reviewed, he will merely waste his time and space as is the case now with so many reviews.

The English literary critic is today an ill man and this is especially the case of

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those figures who have been ruined by the petulant, aggressive, and ungenerous attitude prevailing in British left-wing politics.

This illness is, of course, the national disease—schizophrenia—showing itself as an incapacity to perceive and be moved by the profound. Thus English literary criticism oscillates, week by week, between empty praise and petulant aggression. The praise, however unjustified, represents at least a movement outwards of Eros on the part of the normally closed critic. The aggression of schizophrenia is today the most dangerous thing in British life; showing itself, at one end, as gangsterism—the expression of the need to experience acute excitement—and in the higher, more sublimated, sphere revealing itself as a blunting of those fine and delicate nerves which alone can lead the way to the inner experiencing of a book and an author.

In place of a wide harmonious vision of culture, we have today either clique reviewing—that is to say, a book is only reviewed because the reviewer is a friend of the author or the publisher—or else exaggerated national narcissism.

It is symptomatic that a book of the importance of Professor Heidegger's *Existence And Being* should have been reviewed only in *World Review* of all the large national literary journals. This point rightly stresses the fact that, of all our literary papers (since *Horizon* ceased), *World Review* alone opens its columns to all that is best in modern thought. At the same time, the absence of an evaluation of Heidegger's importance is an expression of that inner freezing of, and repression in, the critical mind which takes place when confronted by the work of a daring and pure thinker.

But can the English critic 'learn' to have a psychic personality responsive to the mystery and the depth of a book? I fear that one either has an inner personality or one has not got it. English schizophrenia is no longer in its infancy and the power of feeling the greatness and the individuality of man is dissolving. Those who are themselves soul-blind cannot see into the soul of a book. The critic must enshroud himself in the depth and heat of the ice-cold garment of love, and feel his vocation as a holy identification existing between himself and the subject reviewed. Their original content must be restored to the words 'looking-over' and 'over-looking'.

'INCITATUS'

London, W.C.1

We dealt, though in a less scientific language than that employed by our correspondent, with this important subject in our editorial last month and shall return to it more fully shortly.

Ed.—W.R.

VENUS *UN*OBSERVED

SIR,

I have a sneaking and unworthy wish that *one* of the contributors of your recent articles about the plays (The Theatre of Christopher Fry, March) could have known what I set out to do!

Yours, etc.

CHRISTOPHER FRY

Shipton-under-Wychwood

'WORLD REVIEW'

SIR,

Permit me to congratulate *World Review* on its new cover and lay-out. Its contents are unique and beyond praise . . .

Yours, etc.

AUGUSTUS JOHN

Fordingbridge

SIR,

. . . By the way, what an extraordinarily good paper it is—I really had no idea. I shall read it regularly in future . . .

Yours, etc.

VICTOR GOLLANCZ

London, W.C.2

SIR,

I much like the appearance of *World Review* and hope it has the chance of an active existence for many years. It is a cultural disgrace that we have not more monthly magazines of serious content and intentions, but a relief that there is at least one . . .

Yours, etc.

GEOFFREY GRIGSON

Broad Town, Swindon

The next issue of *World Review*

will be devoted to

GEORGE ORWELL

and will contain his

Unpublished Notebooks

There will also be contributions by

BERTRAND RUSSELL · TOM HOPKINSON

ALDOUS HUXLEY · JOHN BEAVAN · HERBERT READ

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T. R. FYVEL

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for publication in its Spring Number, 1950

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- WILLIAM EMPSON: Wit in the Essay on Criticism.
- G. P. ELLIOTT: The N.R.A.C.P., *a story*.
- R. P. BLACKMUR: The Possessed of Dostoevsky.
- ALLEN TATE: Longinus.
- FRANCIS FERGUSSON: Hamlet, the Analogy of Action.

as well as contributions by: CLEANTH BROOKS, I. A. RICHARDS, YVOR WINTERS, SUSANNE K. LANGER, KENNETH BURKE, MARIANNE MOORE, JOSEPH KERMAN, WILLIAM TROY, R. P. WARREN, and others.

Subscription: 25/– per year, four numbers (160 pages per issue) post free

English Editor, The Hudson Review, The Queen's College, Oxford

I.C.A.

THE musical activities of the Institute of Contemporary Arts have been varied in nature, with the accent on present-day problems and on broadening the view of the contemporary situation.

During the exhibition '40 Years of Modern Art' in the Academy Hall (which proved excellent for music), two concerts of Chamber Music of the same period were arranged. These introduced first performances of Stravinsky, Bartók, Alban Berg, and Dallapiccola, together with works by young English composers (Alwyn, Bush, Frankel, Lutyens, Mellers, Searle, Phyllis Tate), several of which were specially written for the occasion.

Later in the year the Institute devoted a special session to the latest manifestations of the twelve-tone technique (Dallapiccola, Eisler, Gerhard, Haba, Nigg, Santoro, Searle, Vogel), followed next evening by a very profitable discussion of the subject, in which a number of composers, critics and members of the public took part.

A revelation of outstanding interest was the series of lecture-recitals of Oriental music in the Victoria and Albert Museum, arranged by Gerald Stares Bedbrook. These were devoted to Indian, Chinese, Arabic and Indonesian music, illustrated by performances on native instruments by musicians of those countries.

In July 1949, Miss Harriet Cohen, C.B.E., lectured on 'Technique and Tone', and in November there was a commemorative recital of compositions by Ferruccio Busoni, the great Italian composer, who died in 1924.

The Institute's next enterprise is a series of discussions on three aspects of contemporary music: (*a*) OPERA, (*b*) BALLET, (*c*) FILM. Leading personalities in these three fields have promised their co-operation.

With the acquisition of new premises, the Institute will have the possibility of creating greater opportunities for production of music in conjunction with other arts. Presentation and discussion of new works by young composers will be arranged.

EDWARD CLARK

Inquiries should be addressed to the Director, I.C.A., 6 Fitzroy Street, London, W.1. Tel.: MUS. 5145.

EDITORIAL

THE poem by Kathleen Raine in this issue is the longest we have published so far, and there is a certain significance in this fact. For where, today, could a poem of this length be published unless, of course, the author happens to be Mr. Eliot, or Mr. Auden or Mr. Dylan Thomas? There are very few outlets for poetry which is great but not popular, and the longer the poem, the greater becomes the problem of finding a home for it. In all probability we would have had to wait until the appearance of Miss Raine's next volume of poems in a year or two, if we were lucky, and the loss would have been entirely ours. The whole position is utterly unsatisfactory for the established poet, crippling even for the younger one, and it is only redeemed by the fact that there have, lately, been some public discussions about the need to do something about it.

Mr. Stephen Spender in *Public Opinion* has put forward the not unattractive idea of subscription-lists to ensure the publication of books of poetry. The *Observer* discussed the whole matter thoroughly, and it is good to know that, in a world of A-bombs and H-bombs and insecure government majorities, an important paper can devote sufficient space and seriousness to so relatively unimportant a subject. But into what a lamentable corner did Mr. Ivor Brown, the chief mover of the debate, put the contemporary poet when he concluded that poets found no sale for their work because they were wilfully obscure and, therefore, had only themselves to blame for their unhappy isolation!

It is, of course, true that the common reader is the ultimate arbiter. But it is equally and unfortunately true that the common reader usually takes some little time to acquaint himself with contemporary excellence. How often have works of importance been greeted on their first appearance with only contempt, ridicule, or dull neglect? If this was true in the past, in relatively settled ages when the audience for poetry was large, how much truer is it today? Our age is anything but settled, and the gap between the poet and the public grows perilously wide.

When the conditions of mere existence become ever more complex and when language tends towards arid abstraction, is it to be wondered at that

the genuine poetry of the age—poetry, that is, written by men and women of awareness—should become correspondingly difficult? Surely we must remember that simplicity is only a virtue when it is genuine. It is anything but a virtue when it is false and sentimental. There is always much that is counterfeit in circulation, but this we need not dwell upon. The common reader is surrounded by a dark swarm of complexities, by doubts, irresolutions, and anxieties that his forefathers never knew. Perhaps the common reader contrives to 'escape' them: but this is something the true poet dare not do. Are we to be incensed, then, because a modern poet's subject-matter frequently seems 'unpleasant', because his imagery is difficult, because his rhythms are unlike those, say, of Tennyson?

Probably too many of us are still too immature to have attained Mr. Brown's comforting optimism. It certainly is not easy for a practising poet to share it. For if he enjoys no private means, then he must earn his living —but he cannot do it by poetry. In whatever leisure is his, he writes his verse. And then? A poem is less than half a poem if it is not shared. Gradually our poet has his work accepted by one or two periodicals, probably poor and obscure. Eventually he puts together a collection and sends it to a publisher. But even the saintliest publisher today can afford to devote no more than a minute part of his programme to verse, and the chances are that our poet will learn that he is unlucky. So it may continue. A reasonable amount of discouragement may even be good for a poet: not a crushing mountain of it. A great genius, fanatically devoted to his art, may proceed undaunted on his lonely path without encouragement; he may win through in the end. But not all good poets possess great genius.

What can be done? There have been suggestions for State support. There has been Mr. Spender's subscription idea. There are a number of plans which the Arts Council is working out. Of course, ultimately, Mr. Lehmann's solution to find 'all possible means of stimulating sales' is the only answer. But we would like to make a suggestion. A part of a publisher's revenue comes from the publication of works out of copyright, on which no royalties are paid. Could they not, through the Publishers' Association, consider some method of setting aside a small percentage of the receipts from non-copyright works—one per cent would probably suffice—in order that more poetry be published and encouraged? Thus might the successful dead come to the aid of the living who may be unsuccessful through no fault of their own. We commend the idea in the knowledge that certain publishers of repute are far from regarding the suggestion as sheer uneconomic, and therefore unjustifiable, folly.

KATHLEEN RAINE

A SPARROW'S FLIGHT

I

Pure I was before the world began.
I was the violence of wind and wave,
I was the bird before bird ever sang.

I was never still,
I turned upon the axis of my joy,
I was the lonely dancer on the hill.

I was the rain upon the mountainside,
I was a rising mist,
I was the sea's unrest.

I wove the web of colour
Before the rainbow.
I was the intricacy of the flower
Before the leaf grew.

I was the buried ore,
The fossil-forest,
I knew the roots of things.
Before death's kingdom
I passed through the grave.

Seven times my journey
Circles the universe,
And I remain
Before the first day.

II

I him praise with my mute mouth of night
Uttering silences until the stars
Hang at the still nodes of my troubled waves.
Into my dark I have drawn down his light.

I weave upon the empty floor of space
The bridal dance, I dance the mysteries

That set the house of Pentheus ablaze.
His radiance shines into my darkest place.

He lays in my deep grave his deathless fires,
In me his flame springs fountain tree and heart,
Soars up from nature's bed in a bird's flight.
Into my dark I have drawn down his light.

My leaves draw down the sun with their green hands
And bind his rays into the world's wild rose.
I hold my mirroring seas before his face.
His radiance shines into my darkest place.

III

Let in the wind,
Let in the rain,
Let in the moors tonight!

The storm beats on my window-pane,
Night stands at my bed-foot,
Let in the fear,
Let in the pain,
Let in the trees that toss and groan,
Let in the north tonight.

Let in the nameless formless power
That beats upon my door,
Let in the ice, let in the snow,
The ban-shee howling on the moor,
The bracken-bush on the bleak hillside,
Let in the dead tonight.

The whistling ghost behind the dyke,
The dead that rot in mire,
Let in the thronging ancestors,
The unfulfilled desire,
Let in the wrath of the dead earl,
Let in the unborn tonight.

Let in the cold,
Let in the wet,
Let in the loneliness,
Let in the quick,
Let in the dead,
Let in the unfathomed skies.

Oh how can virgin fingers weave
A covering for the void,

How can my fearful heart conceive
Gigantic solitude?
How can a house so small contain
A company so great?

Let in the dark,
Let in the dead,
Let in your love tonight.

Let in the snow that numbs the grave
Let in the acorn-tree,
The mountain stream and mountain stone,
Let in the bitter sea,
Let in the wild deer and the ram,
Let in the whitening bone.

Oh fearful is my virgin heart
And frail my virgin form,
And must I then take pity on
The raging of the storm
That rose up from the great abyss
Before the earth was made,
That pours the stars in cataracts,
And shakes this violent world?

Let in the fire,
Let in the power,
Let in the invading might.

Oh gentle must my fingers be
And pitiful my heart
Since I must bind in human form
A living power so great,
A living impulse great and wild
That cries about my house,
With all the violence of desire
Desiring this my peace.

Oh pitiful my heart must hold
The lonely stars at rest,
Have pity on the raven's cry
The torrent and the eagle's wing,
The icy water of the tarn
And on the biting blast.

Let in the wound,
Let in the pain,
Let in your child tonight.

IV

The sleeper at the rowan's foot
Dreams the darkness of the root,
Dreams the flow that ascends the vein
And fills with world the dreamer's brain.

Wild tree, filled with wind and rain
Day and night invade your dream,
Wild commotion of the air,
Unseen brightness of the sun,
Waters flowing underground
Rise in bud and flower and shoot,
And the burden is so great
Of the dark flow from without,
Of sun streaming from the sky
And the dead rising from the root,
Of the world's desire to be
In this dreaming incarnate
That world has overflowed the tree.

Oh do not wake, oh do not wake
The sleeper in the rowan's shade!
Mountains rest within his thought,
Clouds are drifting in his brain,
Snows upon his eyelids fall,
Winds are piping in his song,
Night is gathered at his root,
Stars are blossoming in his crown,
Storm without finds peace within,
World is resting in his dream.

Lonely dreamer on the hill,
I have dreamed a thousand years,
I have dreamed returning spring,
Earth's delight and golden sun,
I have dreamed the pheasant's eye,
The heather and the flashing burn,
For the world has flowed within,
And the world has filled my dream—
Dream has overflowed the tree.

World without presses so sore
Upon the roots and branches fine,
The dreamer can contain no more
And overflows in falling flowers,
Lets fall the bitter rowan fruit
Harsh as tears and bright as blood,
Berries that the wild birds eat

Till stripped of dream the sleeper lies,
Stripped of world the naked tree;

But on the hillside I have heard
The voice of the prophetic bird
That feeds upon the bitter fruit,
I have heard the blackbird sing
The wild music of the wind,
Utter the note the sun would cry,
Sing for the burn that flows away.

The dreamer in the rowan tree
As full of world as dream can hold,
As full of dream as tree can bear
Sends the birds singing in the air
As full of song as bird can sing,
As full of world as song can cry,
And yet the song is overflowed,
And pressing at the tree's deep root
Still underground, unformed, is world.

The invading dream must break the tree
So heavy is the weight of sky,
So violent the water's flow,
So vast the hills that would be born.
Beyond the utterance of bird
The mountain voice that would be sung,
The world of wild that would be man.

Make the dream and break the dream,
World that invades the rowan's root,
World that utters the bird's cry,
The river's spate is in the vein,
The song is rising from the heart,
The world is rising in the song,
The dream has overflowed the tree.

V

The window-panes grow dark, the walls recede,
Grow infinitely remote, and the familiar room
No longer houses me, no longer encloses;
House insubstantial into nothing dwindles.
I and the earth must part—and who am I
That with this dark winged messenger must fly
Into the soul's dark night?

I—who am I, that enter death's dimension?
I and this swift-winged bird form have grown one,

My thought is fused with his thought, will with his will,
And we are one in purposes unknown
To bird or soul, human or angel mind,
And yet we go—the destination draws us.

As sleeper wakes from sleep, I wake from waking.
World's image fades and founders, mountain forms,
Garden and trees, heel over into darkness,
Go down the night like ice in northern ocean.
Nothing withholds house from crumbling, hills from falling—
Only the bird-flight, and this travelling
Of soul into its own dark night, are certain.

House that has sheltered me since I was born,
Flowers and trees and skies and running burn,
Body of death I lifelong have been building,
My face, hands, voice, language and cast of thought
No longer me or mine; I dreamed them into being,
Being that is overthrown now into night,
Grows tenuous, and is gone.

Forget such things as I have known, forget—
Cambridge like a broken willow-pattern plate
Sinks in the river of time with its nostalgic trees.
Shakespeare, Homer, Frazer, Darwin leave,
The songs of Purcell and the gods of Greece.
Oblivion resolves all myths, all ambiguities,
Blake and Plotinus lie forgotten in my grave.

In the round barrow on the hill a king's sword rusts
Under the cropped turf; necklace and golden cup
Lie in the finer dust of a dead queen,
And when the ghosts come blowing on the north wind
They find again these treasures that once seemed
Part of their very selves, now underground
In the earth circle, in the bone's mound.

Living I too have haunted memories,
Places once loved, travelled back thirty years
To where home was, to find the hills still standing,
To find the old stone house, the trees cut down,
But water still flowing from the village well
Where once I dipped my bucket as a child.
Even such returning desecrates—
Do not disturb the barrow on the hill,
Leave buried there the treasure of dead kings!

Not in such overlong continuance see
Of amulet or ghost, in wraith of what has been,

Evidence of soul's immortality!
The ghost that haunts, the haunting memory
Is the continuance only of the dead.
Such earth-bound spirits, into soul's night unborn
Miss the one way to that dark destination
Whence the homing soul knows no return.

Yet with what infinite gentleness being flows
Into the forms of nature, and unfolds
Into the slowly ascending tree of life
That opens, bud by bud, into the sky!
World with what unending patience grows,
Ascends the roots from the dark well of night
From stone to plant, from blind sense into sight,
Up to the highest branch, where the ravenhead grows white.

But body was imperfect from the first,
Grows dull with daily use, and the cups overflow
When into us the starry heavens are poured.
Heart, sense, and the fine mesh of word and thought
Will not contain the abundance of the world—
The god hangs crucified in his own tree
And calls on death to come, to break the imperfect mould.

Semele who too much desired the heavenly vision
Won the god's will from his slow purposes
That in the ascending tree, the bird, the stone,
River and mountain, cloud and wind and rain
Had remained hidden since the world began.
Pure being consumed her—for how could sense contain
The power that overflows and shatters every form—
Yet from her death was Dionysus born,

The spirit of fire that runs about the house,
Unhindered deity that can not be bound,
The hidden fire loosed from the heart of things
Breaks into flame, the spirit from the wine,
Spirit breaks loose and dances away the world
As the Bacchantes rend the forms of nature
Bough from bough, leaf from leaf, and limb from limb.

Spirit freed from the mould into which you flowed,
Ariel, prisoner of the groaning tree,
The self you were in nature falls away
All at once into dust as the bird heart homes.
Dark into dark, spirit into spirit flies.
Home with not one dear image in the heart,
Home, virgin soul, to the heart of your dark night!

THE GREATNESS OF BACH

JOSEPH KERMAN

THE demolition of Handel left the saddest of all the many gaps in our contemporary repertoire for, excepting Verdi, none of the great composers has written so warmly and directly for his audience and none has been potentially so popular in the best sense of the word. And none has been so popular in the worst sense of the word and, since Orpheus, none has been dealt with so savagely by his admirers. The story of Handel's ritual murder bears a moral that fits Bach too close for comfort. For a hundred and fifty years Handel withstood adulation, deification, inflation and Worship by Massed Choirs as bravely as one would have expected of that noble master. The ceremonies at which his music was adored grew more gigantic and more cathedral; rhythm faded away as the tempos dragged to an appropriately pious standstill, the texture fused gently into a fat, devout diapason tone, and melody lost itself among the stentorian echoes of four thousand celebrant voices. All in all, a pleasant atmosphere of vague majesty and uplift completely replaced the music; at which point it suddenly dawned on everybody that Handel, like the man in the London Club, had already been dead on his feet for quite some time. The shock that this discovery caused at the beginning of the century was such that now it seems that nothing can resurrect him from the dusty pages of the Novello catalogue. The Dead March, as usual, is from *Saul*.

Exactly the same kind of slow strangulation has been exerted on Bach for many years and, in consequence, he has been steadily losing interest and meaning for the general intellectual public. Moreover, with the Bach performances, things have been made even more exquisite by the element of Handel emulation; and if Bach, we may be sure, would have cut a poor enough figure in Vauxhall Gardens, he is even more at a loss than Handel in the Crystal Palace. On top of all this, after being learnedly analysed as gothic, baroque and classical, Bach has finally been sold very successfully as a romantic in the best Wagner tradition—the kiss of death for a large group of more sensitive and up-to-date listeners. Indeed, whatever life is left in Bach today is due to the work of a small and miscellaneous group of performers whose success with the musical public as a whole is still slight, but whom I would dignify with the name of a new school of Bach criticism. In music the rediscoveries and reinterpretations by which artists of the past live for the present are accomplished as much by performers as by critics; musical performance is actually a sort of criticism, esoteric, but particularly

direct and unencumbered. These musicians have worked largely with Bach's instrumental music, because the instrumental music is easier to do; perhaps the reason that Handel never experienced such a revival, however modest, is that his instrumental music is not solid enough to afford a foothold in an uphill battle.

The fact is that choral music is far and away Bach's most important genre. The two-hundred-odd church cantatas, the secular cantatas, the motets, the Masses, the Passions, the Magnificat, represent a significant majority of his total output; as a rough check, twenty-nine volumes of the complete Bach edition are required for this choral music, as against eight for the keyboard instruments and seven for orchestral and chamber music. What is more, most of this comes from the second half of Bach's creative life, from the time he settled in Leipzig in 1723 till his death twenty-seven years later; while almost all the instrumental music comes from Cöthen in the preceding years, and a good part of the organ music, too, relates to Bach's preliminary posts as a church-organist. Bach without his cantatas is like Palestrina without his masses, Handel without his operas, Schubert without his songs. Bach's ambition in life was to praise God with sacred choral music, and this music assumes some further importance, too, as his aesthetic is examined with more care.

II

The older an old master, the simpler is his basic aesthetic psychology; but this very simplicity makes difficulties for later and more cynical times. The image that guides conventional Bach criticism is Warner Brothers' unhappy genius, working assiduously at masterpiece after masterpiece under the spur of romantic inspiration. This has enough basis in nineteenth-century fact: Beethoven sketching through a dozen dirty notebooks before touching a score, Brahms methodically destroying manuscripts unworthy of his loftiest efforts. But it was only with the beginning of romanticism, say 1770 at the very earliest, that the artist began to consider his every serious work a fairly momentous affair upon which his reputation with the world at large, not to say posterity, must rest. Bach and his contemporaries were too busy writing music to worry much about its greatness. They wrote rapidly and unerringly for occasions that followed one another too regularly to admit much pondering or polishing of scores, and certain simplicities of their style, notably formal, necessarily correspond to these working methods. They were craftsmen more than artists, professional musicians with a job to do and no nonsense, but their art is no less great for the absence of pomposity in their attitude towards it. You can reject this whole aesthetic if you like, though you will find that much of it lingers in a man like Haydn, who was eighteen years older than Goethe, and you will also find the still older music still more peculiar, to say nothing of our present *Gebrauchsmusik*. But

it will not do to ignore it in Bach's best works and blame it for all the others. Of course, much of Bach is less remarkable than his greatest pieces; it is a slim appreciation that values an art for its masterpieces alone. I think only *a priori* reasoning can support the view that the baroque composers fall below their finest efforts any more consistently than their more self-conscious romantic successors.

And of all the baroque craftsmen, Bach was the most consummate. No composer, contemporary or otherwise, has ever based his art so completely upon a bewildering complexity of detail, a luxuriance that almost amounts to fussiness. Absence of formal training need not frighten anyone away from Bach's fugues and other notoriously brainy pieces; composers do not write for a professional audience, and Bach's extravagance of detail is perfectly apparent to the amateur, in every possible musical dimension. Harmony changes with Bach more rapidly than with other composers; the change is a sort of oscillation for, when approaching a key, Bach uses a sort of gloriously irregular spiral which ruminates, passes now to the sub-dominant, now sequentially through the mediants, and finally, as it reaches the key, seems paradoxically to have found it with the utmost certitude. Above these magnificent basses Bach writes an infinite number of contrapuntal lines, or might, as well, for he certainly has more at one time than the ear can apprehend—'wiggly counterpoint' that weaves back and forth like a fine tapestry, always circling on itself and crossing back, and yet somehow always perfectly sure in its own mind as to how it has to come out. The melodic lines themselves are sinuous, broken into long flexible strings of ornamental notes that tease the harmony and circle and contort themselves continuously to meet the other contrapuntal members. Handel, the opera composer, works *al fresco* with the slimmest means possible; Bach uses the maximum resource to produce an incredibly complex miniature. The tendency with Bach is always to get up close and examine the brush-strokes; as you stand back, the whole looks like a busy microcosm. For against all this detailing the entire composition necessarily takes on a compact, doll's-house sense of clockwork, a certain mechanisation that Mr. Virgil Thomson chooses to call the 'chug-chug-chug' spirit, and that Tovey refers to as Bach's perfect punctuality. This is characteristic of Bach's form; nothing is left to the imagination, and every detail of the elaborate texture falls neatly and inevitably into its assigned place within a scheme that is exactly right and exhaustive to the point of naïveté. All the seams show in Bach because he wants them to; the construction itself, the technique, is an essential part of his aesthetic.

Every time Thomson hears a musical composition, he asks himself: 'Is this just a piece of clockwork, or does it also tell time?' Bach tells time; he tells time with chronometer punctuality even in some of the big fugues, like the *Gratias—Dona nobis pacem* of the Mass, which are absolutely neutral in

expression and exist simply as monuments to his technique. One can demonstrate that the clockwork is magnificent; I think one has to feel how it comes to life by a mysterious technical apotheosis. It has been said that Bach's thickly knit counterpoint, with its restless lines twisting and turning in and around each other like baroque columns, around the harmonic notes, all within a harmonic space that is itself constantly shifting in time, that all this is the finest realisation of baroque art in music. As far as texture is concerned, nobody can doubt it; but I imagine that the great baroque composers from Monteverdi to Handel would have been repelled alike by Bach's artisan cult of technique and by his sense of form, with all the lines scurrying into place like a moving-picture of an explosion run backwards. This is the heritage of the petty organists and *Kapellmeister* of Protestant Germany, Pachelbel, Zachow, Georg Böhm, Johann Walther, all the old Bachs and the worthies of the German *Denkmäler*. They are all poky little composers; their clockwork ticks along rustily to this day, but has long ceased telling time. Bach transcends them by imagination and personality, yes, but even more by a sheer personal triumph of technique, of which he himself was aware and not a little proud. The great figure in German art before Bach, Albrecht Dürer, was also a proud man, and for somewhat the same reasons. Once again, it is a complete misunderstanding to overlook clockwork in the finest works, and deprecate it in all the others. It forms the frame of reference for every note that Bach ever put to score.

The expressivity of baroque art in general is derived from the theatre, and of baroque music from the opera of Lully and Scarlatti and Steffani; the opera that was the highest aspiration of every composer of the time. And so all the pathos, grief, triumph and good cheer of baroque music, powerful as it is, has a rhetorical and impersonal quality that separates it quite distinctly from the romantic music to which it has been too facilely compared. The baroque composer strikes the posture of an emotion, instead of exploring it within himself; every emotion is filtered through some great gesture, some conventional exaggeration, and though it may well become intense, sentimental or lachrymose, the footlights always stand between the composer and his audience. Bach is never in his music, always safely outside somewhere, pulling the stops, in a way that even Mozart never seems to be, to say nothing of Beethoven and Wagner. It is this 'abstractness', this extroverted emotion in Bach that makes him seem a 'grey' composer to Mr. Eric Blom and to many others. But nothing can be more moving and more dignified than great rhetoric; it can be perfectly individual, too, though it is not in its nature to be introspective. Bach can vivify stage conventions into great and powerful emotions, but they are generalised emotions, universal if you like, and his personality is manifested in that very power of vivification rather than in a personal quality of the feeling. In a sense, then, it is true that the prayers that open and close

Bach's Mass are prayers of Christianity, not of the composer alone; and I do not know that we feel the same about the *Missa Solemnis* or the *Ode to Joy*. We hear a great deal about the neglected minor masters; the one thing that separates them irrevocably and discreetly from the great composers is that shattering force of imagination that produces music at the same time utterly original and quintessential, unprecedented and yet magnificently right. There is little to say before such works as the *Suscepit Israel* of the Magnificat, the opening pages of the B-minor Mass, the *Confiteor*, the *Dona nobis pacem*. They speak as unmistakably in terms of rhetoric as they operate within the sublime mathematics of Bach's technique.

The presence of a text in no way diminishes the capital importance of technique in Bach's vocal music, though of all his work this is the most consistently and immediately expressive. Bach's imagination responded automatically to a literary subject. The chorale-preludes, since words are understood, are expressive by proxy, the most expressive of the instrumental music; the other instrumental pieces, which often tend toward abstraction, are expressive only by analogy. Nor is this simply a matter of word-painting; Bach, like all the baroque composers, was expressively most at ease with a text, and since the cantata as he knew it had been invented quite frankly to imitate the opera in church, not only are all the musical and literary conventions of the stage implicit in it, but the sentiment naturally flows in the impersonal rhetoric of the baroque tradition. Forty years ago Pirro and Schweitzer discovered in Bach's vocal music a typically elaborate system of word-illustration that he applies almost automatically as soon as he sees an 'expressive' word coming. It is well, however, to realise right away that this element of Bach's style, however fundamental to his composition, is not a purely musical affair and as such is a secondary and considerably less potent means of expression. In vocal and instrumental music alike, expressivity for Bach is first of all a matter of music, pure music, and connections between the music and the words are of more aesthetic interest to the rational man of the eighteenth century than to the listener in the twentieth. Still, you cannot understand Bach without them, and they make an admirable corrective for the Masterpiece theory that Bach, as a great master, must somehow be rather less human and more awful than the rest of us. They may be neat or laboured, moving or quaint; there are places in Bach—in the *Esurientes* of the Magnificat, in Verse III of *Christ lag*—that make no sense at all without an understanding of this word-painting, and none of the vocal music can be grasped in all its breadth without detailed analysis along these lines. Though I cannot see much aesthetic value to it, exegetically it remains another dimension of Bach's art, and one that obtains in the vocal music only. For the rest, it may be remarked that choral music frequently gives Bach a greater scope than other media afford; both in time, since he has large cyclic

arrangements to deal with, and in space, where the *Osanna* of the Mass, for example, uses eight voices with a festival orchestra of three trumpets and timpani, flutes and oboes by twos, strings and continuo. Clockwork is never used to better advantage.

III

The *Dona nobis pacem* of the B-minor Mass, mentioned in passing above, is an abstract fugue of masterly and unprecedented construction. It operates on the principle, well known to a certain romantic tetralogist, that a calm both sublime and *urelementalisch* can be produced by a motionless D-major if you can only carry it off. In form it is as simple as in principle; two great corner sections irrevocably in the tonic, and a brief, almost shadowy bridge of tonal movement between them. The fugue subject is primitive clay of which any man can fashion what he will; with Bach it is to be as immobile and immemorial as the Himalaya Mountains, and so he presents it with its answer some thirteen times, never once moving from the tonic! The fugue itself is quite short, but the immensity of the opening and closing sections is established by this constant repetition of the subject, always from tonic and dominant as though the dim past to which it relates were to predate the evolution of modulation. The function of the second section, which is all of five bars long, is to modulate, but it does not modulate so much as glance dispassionately, fragmentarily, at a group of related keys. The beautifully skilled sequence by which this is manipulated is harmonically the same as that which opens Verse III of *Christ lag*, and a hundred other places; but the depth of subtlety that has grown in Bach's technique since Weimar is self-evident as the less stable second subject enters in a new voice at each of the five steps, and the counterpoint thickens accordingly. Now, at the very start, Bach had abandoned a time-honoured advantage, almost consciously, by exposing both his subjects in close stretto. So the final section transcends the beginning not by the polyphonic vigour of stretto, but by the cumulative grandeur of thirteen entries, one on top of the other, in every conceivable arrangement that is again inexorably in the tonic, now uninterrupted and unaccompanied by the weaker second subject. This quality of consummation, rather than climax, is further illuminated as the trumpets, which heretofore have occasionally marched solemnly with the soprano, descend from heaven like the gods of the Venetian opera to join the infinite procession with motionless entries of their own, a fifth and sixth voice added for four measures to the normal resource, *ex machina*. The counterpoint is always marvellously new, now tinged with a solid and reassuring subdominant, until at long last the trumpets and all unfold to the first real dominant cadence of the piece. Nothing contributes to the serenity of the whole as much as Bach's postponement of this almost obligatory modulation until *after* the penultimate subdominant glow. The punctuality of the

close—there is no other word—is perfectly reflected by so small a detail as the kettledrum rhythm under the full, bright three-trumpet texture.

The imagination to conceive of this *tour de force*, the confidence to undertake it and the technical equipment to rescue it from fiasco are uniquely Bach's. He understood the timelessness and sublimity that are to be derived from a plastic manipulation of purely musical means, variety in repetition and tonal establishment. Its monumental abstraction is no more or no less appropriate to the text *Wir danken dir, Gott, und verkündigen deine Wunder*, for which Bach first wrote it, than to *Gratias agimus tibi, propter magnam gloriam tuam* or *Dona nobis pacem*, as it twice appears in the Mass. Petty points of mechanical connection to words and phrases disappear before the great truth that this fugue has finally found its place: at the end of a great, impossible epic, the Mass in B-minor. Its qualification for this position, its aesthetic justification for existence, is entirely a musical matter, a matter of transcendental technique. 'Listen to this for its own sake'—this is Tovey's only remark on the *Dona nobis pacem*—'and you will find it a worthy and peaceful close to Bach's Mass in honour of the Divine Glory.'

THE *HORIZON* DECADE

STEPHEN SPENDER

OFTEN, during an air-raid on London in 1940, I would hear a bomber diving downwards with a roar, as though its trajectory described a valley in the mountain-high air inhabited by aircraft. Then I would reassure myself by imagining that, in the whole area of the County of London, there were no more houses, but that the bomber was gyrating and diving over an empty plain covered in darkness. This picture was both reassuring and exact: for it fixed my attention on my own smallness as a target compared with the immensity of London. And this was the reality. Only my fears were exposed.

If I thought of London as the London of my mind, and not as a geographical expanse, I only imagined places I knew and whose names occurred to me: Oxford Street, Piccadilly, St. Paul's, Liverpool Street, Kensington, Paddington, Maida Vale, Hampstead, and so forth. And even these places were represented in my mind only by the names of a few familiar features, churches, streets, and squares, and not by all the other streets and the innumerable buildings which I did not know.

Although the raids stopped, or happened only at rare intervals, this picture of the aeroplane over the huge plain, with the people concealed in crevices, can be enlarged to a vision of the new phase of domination and threat by machine-power politics, which the world had now entered and which did not end with the peace. The aeroplane filled ever-widening circles in the minds of people beneath it; but the pilot and even the officers who commanded him at bases, their masters in governments and the vanquished and victors of the war, were all equally automata controlled by the mechanism of war.

It was a sign of this submission of human beings to the mechanical forces they had called into being and put into motion against one another that I was no longer interested in the personality of Hitler, since, having begun the war, he had not power to make it stop.

Everyone had shrunk in his own mind as well as in the minds of his fellow-beings, because his attention was diverted to events dwarfing individuals. These events could only lead to more battles and a catastrophic victory, for the winning as for the losing side. Personal misfortunes seemed of minor importance compared with the universal nature of the disaster overtaking civilisation. So that in the summer of 1940, when invasion seemed imminent, a friend could say to me: 'Within six weeks from now, if I blow out my brains and they spatter all over the carpet, in my own home and in the presence of my own family, no one will think the incident worth noticing.'

We lived in a trance-like condition in which, from our fixed positions in our island-fortress-prison, we witnessed as in a dream not only armies, but whole populations, controlled by the magnetic force of power. Even in the minds of those who knew them well, France and other continental countries had become mental concepts only, areas in our minds where incredible things happened; there, puppet dictators transmitted orders received from Germany, and Germany, a vast arsenal of mechanical power, added to its resources the industries of other nations and the slave labour of their peoples. Even today *France under the Occupation* remains to me an idea only, to which I can attach little reality, a hallucinated vision of folly, betrayal, and despairing courage. So that, if some French friend begins to speak of his life during those years, I stare at him as though expecting to see him change into a different person.

During these months, a most poignant event, the suicide of Virginia Woolf, was observed by me as through a thick pane of glass, seen very clearly, but all sound shut out: the personal tragedy seen through the vast transparent impersonal one.

For the time being, the only hope was that the current of power should be reversed and turned back on those who had first employed it: that the pendulum of the bombers, swinging over us, should swing back again over

Germany. Yet to admit this was an admission of spiritual defeat: for it was to say that hope lay in power, in opposing despair with despair. We said this, with the result that we are still saying it. All this has implied the surrender of the only true hope for civilisation—the sense of the individual that he can change events and that, whether or not he does so, he is responsible for them.

From now on, the fate of individuals was more and more controlled by a public fate which seemed beyond control. For control involves not merely putting machinery into motion, but also being able to make it stop: modern war is a machine which many can start, but it can only be stopped at the moment when it has destroyed or been destroyed by another machine. Control means being able to relate a programme of action to the results of that action. Now we had arrived at a stage when a large part of the resources of great nations were poured into programmes of which no one could foresee the results. All this was only leading to subsequent plans for making atomic and hydrogen bombs to defend East against West or West against East in a meaningless struggle between potential ashes to gain a world of ashes. For, in the course of the struggle, the vast 'machinery of production', together with its capitalist or proletarian owners, and all the sacred theories of whichever class, would be as outmoded as its own ruins, like the civilisation and theories of Babylonian astrologers.

That part of living which was devoted to spiritual and personal values became a marginal activity in society, and for individuals a side-line, unless they happened to be old, sick, or socially unreliable. The most serious result was the effect on the minds of individuals, particularly the young, who were discouraged to find themselves in a world where no action of theirs, and nothing they created or thought, could alter the course of events. Here though, on the level of thought and spiritual life, was the real challenge. For it is intolerable that men who, with their minds, have invented machines of destruction, and in their policies made themselves the half-slaves of these machines, should not be able to unthink what is a product of their minds.

II

Within this situation of a world hypnotised by power, there were, none the less, two movements which expressed a faith in human values.

First, there was a revival of interest in the arts. This arose spontaneously and simply, because people felt that music, the ballet, poetry and painting were concerned with a seriousness of living and dying with which they themselves had suddenly been confronted. The audiences at the midday concerts of the National Gallery, or at the recitals of music and ballet in provincial towns and at factories, sat with a rapt attention as though they were listening for some message from the artist, who, though perhaps he

had lived in other times, was close to the same realities as themselves—and to the pressing need to affirm faith and joy within them. There was something deeply touching about this interest in the arts; it was one of the few things which can still make me regret the war.

The affirmation of these timeless qualities was the only answer of human personality to war. In a word, it was—survival. It answered that side of humanity which had produced the war with the indestructibility of this other side—human love.

Lest it be objected that war is infinitely destructive and human love infinitely destructible, I repeat what I have said before: the inner life of man creates his outward circumstances. Perverted love, in the form of nationalism, or class solidarity (what is called 'communist love') produces the forces of destruction in our time. Although we should support every outward movement for attaining peace and social improvement, it is only within the inner life that man can will himself to be a coherent whole and not a part set against another part.

The writers who surmounted this situation were those who best resisted the imprisoning preoccupation of this age with its own time. They could do this either because, like T. S. Eliot, they had devoted themselves to the task of relating their time to other times, or because they were fertile anachronisms, the survival-heroes of a period of luxuriant, cultivated, well-watered individualists, having an increasing worth for our age, as they grew more rare.

The gravest weakness of the writers of the Divided Generation was that they were time-bound. They had taken a bet that a world order of peace and social justice would emerge in their time, just as Wordsworth, Coleridge and Shelley had done in their day. They lost, as the Romantics had done, and were forced to spend their next phase searching for an attitude which would be independent of external events.

T. S. Eliot was the least time-bound of contemporaries. He had always regarded the tradition as the co-existence of the past with the present, like places geographically separated from one another co-existing in time. To him the traditionalist was not the remote heir of a disintegrated inheritance, but a missionary travelling from a civilised area—the past—into a fragmentary and incoherent one—the present. His mission was to interpret the integrated past within the fragmentary present, relating himself to both.

The corollary of this general view of co-existent past and present with a tradition where 'existing monuments forming an ideal order' . . . were . . . 'modified by the introduction of the new (the really new) work of art among them,'[1] was belief in the immortality of the soul. For the living, as for the dead, the present was an episode, a beginning even, and not the edge of time it appears to contemporaries in any age.

[1] *Tradition and the Individual Talent*

Eliot's writing did not (as some critics have asserted) offer an 'escape' into the past from the problems of the present. It confronted the breakdown of present values with past order, in the mind of the responsive reader. His work might, indeed, be said to have two aspects: the first, culminating in *The Waste Land*, shows us how deeply we are involved, since we are products of our civilisation, in the fragmentariness of our time: the second, culminating in the *Four Quartets*, shows how we are involved in eternity and therefore free from it.

The lesson for a generation unable to put the instruments of power to constructive uses was to show that, however much the individual might be committed to social tasks, he belonged to an eternal order of events where he was not product and victim of his time.

Edith Sitwell, another poet who now emerged with great power, had something of the time-defeating quality of Yeats: that is to say, a power of invoking a massive and colourful historic past, whether of Egypt, Byzantium, early Christian mysticism, or the Elizabethans. She wrote in long lines, whose slow metric was like a harvesting pulsation under an imagery of mature and golden ripeness. Her fervid poetry, while attaining a wide and beautiful objectivity, yet obviously derived from a profoundly personal existence.

Besides making a great impression during the war years by a poetry which projected the rather isolated qualities of her early writing into an experience deeply shared by her contemporaries, she impressed all who met her or heard her read her poems by her presence, which was that of one of the survivors of a better and richer age.

At this time, my wife and I got to know her well. Her features seemed carved as though out of alabaster, in which were cut narrowly-watchful eyes, amused, kind, cold, sad, or even at moments incisively shrewd. She wore magnificent dresses and large jewellery—an ivory cross, or jade pendant or gold set with large and beautiful stones as in a bishop's mitre or cross. In her appearance as in her poetry, she was triumphantly herself, yet endlessly reaching beyond herself into other people and other times.

We learned to appreciate the sensitive sympathy of Edith Sitwell. Her own well-being was bound up with that of her friends. After experiencing her generosity and sympathy, I was not surprised to learn that she had given up years of her life to nursing a sick friend.

III

In October, 1939, Cyril Connolly, Peter Watson and I planned the review *Horizon*, the first number of which appeared in January 1940. Throughout the summer of 1940, the staff of *Horizon* was, for a few weeks, evacuated to Thurlstone in Devonshire. There, on that beautiful coast (near Salcombe where I had spent many summer holidays of my boyhood) we received

letters from pilots fighting in the Battle of Britain, to say that they felt that, as long as *Horizon* continued, they had a cause to fight for.

Such letters could only make us feel ashamed. Yet for these young men, *Horizon*, *New Writing* and one or two other literary reviews were the means whereby they felt that they, as well as we, survived the war. One such was Gully Mason, who sent us an article describing the life of a miner. We accepted it, and then he wrote asking whether he could come to see us. When he did so, he explained with some embarrassment that perhaps we might be wrong to think of his article as an example of proletarian writing, as, although he worked as a miner, his father owned the mine. Gully Mason was famous for his feats in swimming rivers, climbing, and so forth. He was an example of what was most promising in his generation: a combination of athleticism with a sensitive feeling for the arts. He died in the Battle of Britain. Another pilot, whose gentleness and courtesy impressed me, was Timothy Corsellis. Corsellis was a fighter pilot, who, when he was switched to bombing, objected to his superiors, on the grounds that he wished only to fight against destruction, not to destroy. He was directed to pilot planes across the Atlantic, which he continued to do until he died in an accident. At this time, I was trying to get work in Civil Defence, and Corsellis, who had been an Air Raid Warden for a few weeks, spent a day taking me to his old headquarters. It was only after he was dead that I found in an anthology a poem by him addressed to me in which he described this meeting, concluding with the words: 'Now I see you much as I am.' So, even while feeling shame and humility before these dead, it is right also to say that the service they required of us was that we should create.

The strength of *Horizon* lay not in its having any defined cultural or political policy, but in the vitality and idiosyncrasy of the editor, Cyril Connolly. I, who started out with concern for planning post-war Britain, defending democracy, encouraging young writers, and so forth, was disconcerted to find myself with an editor who showed little sense of responsibility about these things. His editorial Comments were brilliant, wayward, inconsistent, sometimes petulant. But he wrote in a style which was at times like a voice speaking Latin words of honey, and when (for instance) he described a sea anemone on a rock seen through distorting planes of tugging tides, I saw the serious point of what was delightful and absurd about him at Thurlstone: his afternoon setting out, dressed in jersey and shorts, carrying bucket, net and spade, for the rock-and-sand pools along the beach at low tide, into which he would stare, while prodding at the sandy pond-floor with his net. In describing these expeditions, Connolly was a superb mimic. He could *be* a prawn, crab or lobster hiding in the crevice of a rock, as he described his attempts to catch one. Connolly is, I think, the best living parodist, a judgment which readers of *The Condemned*

Playground will probably concur. For him parody is a spontaneous and immediate response bubbling from his lips twenty times a day, with deceptive amiability. In the evenings at Thurlstone we would listen to the six o'clock news. In their refined B.B.C. accents, the announcers would cite from the statements of pilots. 'We gave' (*long pause*) 'Jerry' (*long pause, followed by the next three words spoken very quickly*) 'a jolly good' (*long pause*) 'pranging'. As soon as the news was switched off, Connolly would continue with an imitation of the B.B.C. announcer's action an account of his conflict with a prawn.

From Thurlstone I sometimes used to take the bus to Salcombe, where I would rent a boat for the afternoon. I rowed out of the harbour, eastwards beyond Start Point to a place about a mile out to sea which was exactly opposite a stone wall dividing fields on shore, and there I used to row in a wide circle, trailing for fish. This being alone in a boat on a fine summer day, when the sun's rays, absorbed by the sea, surrounded me like a million little green flames, in the afternoon, was a link between my boyhood experiences on the same patch of sea and the peace and solitude of the fires in my few fire-fighting experiences which I shall later describe. Most of the fish I caught were pollock, with occasional mackerel and bass. Connolly, who was a gourmet, particularly disliked pollock, which he called 'poor man's cod'.

In *Horizon*, Connolly's policy was to publish what he liked. This included, in the early numbers particularly, the work of several new young poets: among them, Laurie Lee, W. R. Rodgers, Adam Drinan, Francis Scarfe, and several others, some of whom became well known afterwards. But to prefer the young to the old, or to support a movement, or follow a party, was not *Horizon*'s function. Although Connolly was inconsistent, being energetic, enthusiastic, indolent, interested and bored, by turns, he held his own views passionately and, on the whole, with judgment; and he faced adverse criticism with an equanimity which astonished me, as I knew him, in personal relationships, at any rate, to care greatly whether he was or wasn't liked. There were days when, if I showed him a poem by some poet whom I thought should be encouraged, he handed it back saying: 'Are you certain that anyone will want to read it in twenty years' time?' On other occasions he seemed to show a more relaxed standard than this would imply. The point is, though, that *Horizon* was always his own. As an editor, he was like a cook, producing with each number a new dish with a new flavour. Sometimes the readers objected, finding it too light, too sweet, too lumpy, or too stodgy, but he had somehow created in them a need to taste more. Or, to change the metaphor, he carried on a kind of editorial flirtation with his readers, so that they were all in some peculiar way admitted to his moods, his tastes, his whims, his fantasies, his generous giving of himself, combined with his temperamental coyness.

We began *Horizon* by inviting some of the best-known living writers to send in contributions. One with a considerable reputation responded with a lengthy work by no means unworthy of him. When it had been set up in proof, Connolly, on reading it in print, rejected it. Once, I was with him in a restaurant when a writer introduced himself with the words: 'Mr. Connolly, why didn't you publish an article by me which you accepted six months ago?' Connolly snapped: 'Because it was good enough to print but not good enough to publish.'

We began editing *Horizon* in the Bloomsbury flat where I had lived with Inez. The long, black-topped inlaid desk which I had built in Hammersmith was used by the secretary and the business manager. Connolly sat reading manuscripts in the editorial chair by the window, occasionally glancing up to see whether any German aeroplanes were coming over, for, during the 'phoney war' period, there were constant false alarms, and we expected a raid which would demolish whole districts of London.

Our most difficult task was to choose a name for the magazine. Connolly thought first of *Equinox*, with the quotation from Marlowe's *Faustus*, *Currite equi noctis*, on the title page. Yet *Equinox* seemed unoriginal, and the quotation rather discouraging. For some time we weighed the claims of *Orion*. As I remember (though Connolly seems to remember differently), we chose *Horizon* in a moment of despair, when I took a copy of Gide's *Journal* from the bookshelf, and my eye fell on the word *horizon*, which occurred rather frequently. (But when, quite recently, I told Connolly that this was my recollection of the origin of the name *Horizon*, he looked at me amusedly and said: 'Think again, Stephen. If you think hard enough, you'll remember that you thought first of *everything*.')

We inserted a very few quarter-page advertisements in the literary weeklies. Two or three hundred people filled in the little form which was part of the advertisement, and these were the original subscribers.

At this time I lived alone in the flat which had become the office of *Horizon*, and I would be awakened in the morning by the envelopes which contained our filled-in subscription forms, and a cheque for 6s. 6d., falling on to the floor. This reminded me of Virginia Woolf's telling me about the orders arriving at their Richmond House for the first books printed by the Hogarth Press.

The first number of *Horizon* ran into a second edition, in which one or two misprints were corrected. In his editorial Comment for the second number, Connolly discussed the reception of the first by the critics: 'To run through the first number, the editorial is escapist and cagey, the poetry out of date (except Auden which is obscure), Priestley is Priestley, Grigson is spiteful, Bates is Bates. There are too many political articles, and, while full of dull things, the magazine is also much too short. Another line of attack is to concede that the first number is interesting, but to add that it is

middlebrow and "smarty", and a third is to abandon the contents to their own merit and attack the policy or absence of policy. *Horizon* is full of lovely things but . . . should a magazine be just full of lovely things? Shouldn't it stand for something? Be animated by a serious purpose? Be getting somewhere?' *Reynolds* delivered a homily in which the editors of *Horizon* are identified with the émigré writers Huxley, Heard and Isherwood, who have gone to California to 'contemplate their navels.' Others accuse us of going back to the twenties, and seldom has a periodical exuded such an atmosphere of sameness and tameness, or so combined Regency smartness with Georgian mediocrity as the ill-fated *Horizon.*

In the same Comment of February 1940, Connolly wrote: 'The departure of Auden and Isherwood to America a year ago is the most important literary event of the decade.' It did, indeed, signify the end of a literary movement. For them also, leaving England marked a turning-point.

They were both criticised severely for having left when they did, and their departure helped discredit the movement of the 1930s. But this movement had already been made bankrupt by events. The only important question was whether they could produce better work in the United States than in England. This in the short run was their own affair; in the long run it would be decided by later critics who could compare their work in two continents. Meanwhile the comments of journalists were irrelevant, although one might genuinely regret the unwritten stories of Isherwood about London and Manchester in the blitz, or about the Occupation of Germany, and the poems of Auden from wartime England. That one can imagine such works and miss them is a tribute to the power and originality of these two.

IV

The second movement expressing a faith in human values, which developed during the war, was of those who believed that a better world could grow out of the war. They dreamed of planned cities which would rise above the bomb-damaged ruins. Thus dreaming, sometimes they seemed almost grateful to the Germans for destroying the slums. There would be better schools, and communal centres, and free medical care for the whole people. They did not seem convinced that there would also be unparalleled poverty. An assumption of the planners was that an unplanned community was so wasteful that planning would soon make up for the losses of the war.

I supported the planners, though I reproached myself for never feeling I cared sufficiently about their plans. For one thing, these plans were hardly linked up at all with the aims of the war itself. Wartime Britain tended to be divided between the military realists occupied in destroying the cities of Europe, and the planners, who would come into action when the realists had destroyed enough for the war to be won. And just as planning

was not linked up with the spirit of the war, so I could not imagine it greatly affecting the spirit of the peace. How could the war result in anything but more bitterness and hatred, and a general acceptance of further wars, which would destroy all plans? The only plan which would have inspired me with hope would have been one to bring Germany into the community of democratic nations on equal terms, as soon as the Nazis had been defeated. But this, which would have given hope of creating a peaceful Germany, I knew to be impossible. If I had any illusions about this, they were destroyed when, at the end of the war, I offered my services to a Selection Board who were considering candidates to work in Germany after the war. The particular job for which I was applying was to propagate our policy in the German Universities, and through the press and the media of publicity. I was asked by one of the officers of the Selection Board what I thought I could do in Germany. I made a little speech in which I said that German culture had often shown strong leanings towards internationalism. After the last war, for example, German literature, the theatre, the films, and so on were flooded by foreign influences. Unfortunately, these were often bad, and in their German form became worse, setting up an idea in the German mind of a weak and decadent cultural cosmopolitanism instead of a strong internationalism. I suggested that, after the war, we should study how to strengthen the German need in Universities and the arts to have contact with other nations. One of my interviewers said: 'We can assure you, Mr. Spender, that after this war there will be *no* culture in Germany.' And with these words, I was dismissed. When I went to Germany a few months later, it was in a temporary capacity, and I was there only a few weeks, instead of for the two years which I had offered to the Selection Board.

'LES JUSTES'
or
THE SENSITIVE MURDERERS

A DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS BY ALBERT CAMUS

AUTHOR'S NOTE

In February 1905, at Moscow, a group of terrorists belonging to the Socialist Revolutionary Party organised a bomb attack against the Grand Duke Serge, uncle of the Tsar. This assassination attempt, and the singular circumstances that preceded and followed it, are the subject of Les Justes. *I have even kept Kaliayev's own name for the hero, not from any imaginative laziness, but from a feeling of respect for men and women who, in the most pitiless of tasks, were not able to overcome their hearts. Since then, it is true, we have made progress, and the hate that weighed these exceptional souls with intolerable suffering has become a comfortable system. All the more reason for evoking these great shadows, their just revolt, their difficult fraternity, their enormous efforts to reconcile themselves to murder—and, at the same time, to give expression to our own loyalty.*

A. C.

EDITORIAL NOTE

After making the plans for the assassination in the opening scene, the first attempt to kill the Duke is frustrated in the Second Act, which we print here, by the unexpected presence of two small children, and is not accomplished until the Third Act. The last two acts are concerned chiefly with the problem of the Man Condemned to Death and raise the all-important question whether he can transcend the society that condemned him and how he can triumph in his solitude without the help of God.

An article by Camus about the problems surrounding the play appeared in our November issue last year under the title *The Sensitive Murderers*.

ALBERT CAMUS with the 'sensitive murderers' during the rehearsal of the play

A scene from the Second Act of the Paris production of Les Justes

'LES JUSTES'

ACT II

SCENE: *The Terrorist Headquarters, a small flat overlooking a main street. Night has fallen. Boris ('Boria') Annenkov is at the window, Dora Dolebov beside the table.*

ANNENKOV: They're at their posts. Stepan has just lit his cigarette.

DORA: When is the Grand Duke expected to drive by?

ANNENKOV: Any moment now. Listen! Isn't that a carriage? . . . No.

DORA: Don't fidget like that! Do sit down.

ANNENKOV: What about the bombs?

DORA: Do sit down . . . There's nothing more we can do.

ANNENKOV: Yes, there is. We can envy them.

DORA: Your place is here. You are the leader.

ANNENKOV: I'm the leader, yes. But Yanek's a better man than I, and perhaps it's he who . . .

DORA: The risk's the same for all. For the man who throws and for the man who doesn't throw.

ANNENKOV: In the long run, yes, the risk's the same. But at this moment Yanek and Alexis are in the firing line. Oh, I know I haven't the right to be with them. Still, I can't help fearing sometimes that I'm a little too ready to play my part; after all it . . . it makes things easier, not having to throw the bomb oneself.

DORA: What if it does? The only thing that matters is for you to do your duty, to the end.

ANNENKOV: How calm you are, Dora!

DORA: I am not calm; I'm frightened . . . Let me tell you something. I've been with the Group for three years, haven't I? And for two years I've been making the bombs. I have done all I was told to do, and I don't think I ever let you down. That's so, isn't it?

ANNENKOV: Of course it is, Dora.

DORA: Well, all those three years I have been afraid; I have been haunted by that creeping fear that leaves you only when you go to sleep, and are lucky enough not to dream; but when you wake up, there it is, waiting at your bedside . . . So the only thing was to get used to it. I've trained myself to keep calm just when I'm most afraid. But that's nothing to be proud of.

ANNENKOV: On the contrary, you *should* feel proud. Look at me! I've

never mastered anything. Do you know, I often catch myself regretting the bad old days—a gay life, pretty women, and all the rest of it! Yes, I was fond of women, wine, dancing through the night . . .

DORA: I'd guessed as much, Boria, and that's why I am so fond of you. Your heart is not dried up. Even if it's still hankering after pleasure, surely that's better than the hideous silence which often settles in at the very place whence voices used to rise—authentically human voices.

ANNENKOV: Dora! I can't believe my ears! *You*, of all people, feel like that?

DORA: Ssh! Listen. (*She puts a finger to her lips, listening intently. A distant rumble of wheels; then silence.*) No. It's not he, not yet. My heart's thudding, thudding. You see! I've still a lot to learn.

ANNENKOV (*going to the window*): Ah! Stepan's made a sign. He's coming. (*Again there is a rumble of wheels; it comes nearer and nearer, passes below the windows, then gradually recedes. A long silence.*) In a few seconds . . . (*They listen.*) How long it seems! (*Dora makes a fretful gesture. A long silence. Suddenly, a peal of bells in the distance.*) What *can* have happened? Yanek should have thrown his bomb by now. The carriage must have reached the theatre. And what about Alexis? Look! Stepan's turned, now he's running towards the theatre.

DORA (*clinging to him*): Yanek's been arrested. I'm sure it's that. Oh Boria, we must do something, we . . .

ANNENKOV: Wait. (*Listens.*) No, nothing. That settles it.

DORA: I don't understand. How can Yanek have been arrested when he hasn't done anything? Oh, I know he was quite ready for it. In fact, prison, the trial, were what he wanted. But after he'd killed the Grand Duke. Not like this, not like this!

ANNENKOV (*looking out*): Here's Voinov. Open, quick! (*Dora opens the door. Voinov enters; he is greatly agitated.*) What's happened, Alexis?

VOINOV: I've no idea. I was waiting for the first bomb. Then I saw the carriage rounding the corner, and nothing'd happened. I was completely baffled. I thought a bit, then I concluded you had called it off at the last minute. So I ran back here.

ANNENKOV: What about Yanek?

VOINOV: I haven't seen him.

DORA: He's been arrested.

ANNENKOV (*who is still looking out of the window*): No. There he is. He's coming back.

(*Dora opens the door. Kaliayev enters, his face streaming with tears.*)

KALIAYEV: Brothers . . . forgive me . . . I couldn't bring myself . . .

(*Dora goes to him and clasps his hand.*)

DORA (*soothingly*): That's all right. Don't worry . . .

ANNENKOV: What happened?

DORA (*to Kaliayev*): Don't take it so hard, Yanek. Sometimes it's like that, you know; at the last minute everything goes wrong.

ANNENKOV: No, I can't believe my ears.

DORA: Let him be. You're not the only one, Yanek. Schweitzer, too, couldn't bring it off the first time.

ANNENKOV: Yanek, did you . . . take fright?

KALIAYEV (*indignantly*): Take fright? Certainly not—and you haven't the right . . .

(*Knocks at the door in the agreed code. At a sign from Annenkov, Voinov goes out. Kaliayev seems completely prostrated. A short silence. Stepan enters.*)

ANNENKOV: Well?

STEPAN: There were children in the Grand Duke's carriage.

ANNENKOV: Children?

STEPAN: Yes. The Grand Duke's niece and nephew.

ANNENKOV: But Orlov told us the Grand Duke would be by himself.

STEPAN: There was the Grand Duchess as well. Too many people, I suppose, for our young poet. Luckily, the police spies didn't notice anything.

(*Annenkov speaks in a low tone to Stepan. All are gazing at Kaliayev who now looks up and fixes his eyes on Stepan.*)

KALIAYEV (*wildly*): I'd never dreamt of anything like that. Children, children especially. Have you ever noticed children's eyes—that grave, intent look they often have? Somehow I never can face it. I have to look away . . . And, to think, only a moment before I was so gloriously happy, standing at the corner of that little by-street, in a patch of shadow. The moment I saw the carriage-lamps twinkling in the distance, my heart began to race. With joy, I can assure you. And as the rumble of wheels came nearer, it beat faster and faster. Thudding inside me like a drum. I wanted to leap into the air. I'm almost sure that I was laughing, laughing for joy. And I kept on saying, 'Yes . . . Yes . . . ' Do you understand? (*Averting his gaze from Stepan, he relapses into his dejected attitude.*) I ran forward. It was then I saw the children. They weren't laughing, not they! Just staring into emptiness, and holding themselves very straight. How sad they looked! Dolled up in their best clothes, with their hands resting on their thighs, like two little statues framed in the windows on each side of the door. I didn't see the Grand Duchess. I saw only them. If they had turned my way, I think I might have thrown the bomb—if only to extinguish that sad look of theirs. But they kept staring straight ahead. (*Raising his head, he looks at the others. Silence. Then, in a still lower voice*) I can't explain what happened to me then. My arms went limp. My legs seemed to be giving way beneath me. And, a moment afterwards, it was too late. (*Another silence; he is staring at the floor.*) Dora, did I dream it, or was there a peal of bells just then?

DORA: No, Yanek, you did not dream it.

(*She lays her hand on his arm. Kaliayev looks up and sees their eyes intent on him. He rises to his feet.*)

KALIAYEV: Yes, look at me, brothers, look at me . . . But I'm no coward, Boria, I did not flinch. Only I wasn't expecting them. And everything went with such a rush. Those two earnest little faces, and in my hand that hideous weight. I'd have had to throw it at *them.* Like that! Straight at them. No, I just couldn't bring myself . . . (*He scans their faces.*) In the old days when I used to go out driving on our estate in the Ukraine, I always drove hell-for-leather. I wasn't afraid of anything, except of running down a kid—that was my one fear. I pictured a sort of brittle thud as the small head hit the roadway, and the mere thought of it made me shiver. (*He is silent for some moments.*) Help me . . . (*Another silence.*) I meant to kill myself just now. I came back only because I thought I owed it to you; you were the only people who could judge me, could say if I was wrong or right, and I'd abide by your decision. But here I am—and you don't say anything. (*Dora comes beside him, her hand brushing his shoulder. He looks round, then continues in a toneless voice*) This is what I propose. If you decide that those children must be killed, I will go to the theatre and wait till they are coming out. Then I shall handle the situation by myself, unaided; I shall throw the bomb and I can promise not to miss. So make your decision; I'll do whatever the Group decides.

STEPAN: The Group had given you orders to kill the Grand Duke.

KALIAYEV: That's so. But I wasn't asked to murder children.

ANNENKOV: Yanek's right. That wasn't on the programme.

STEPAN: It was his duty to obey.

ANNENKOV: I was in charge of operations and I'm to blame. Every possibility should have been foreseen, so that no one could feel the least hesitation about what to do. Well, now we have to settle whether we let this chance go by, or tell Yanek to wait outside the theatre for them to come out. You, Alexis, what do you advise?

VOINOV: I don't know what to say. I suspect I'd done as Yanek did. But I'm not sure of myself. (*In an undertone*) My hands—I can't trust them not to tremble.

ANNENKOV: And you, Dora?

DORA (*emphatically*): I'd have flinched, like Yanek. So how can I ask of others what I couldn't bring myself to do?

STEPAN: I wonder if you people realise what this decision means? Two solid months of sleuth-work, of hairbreadth escapes—gone with the wind! Two wasted months! Egor arrested to no purpose. Rikov hanged to no purpose. Must we start that all over again? Weeks and weeks of harrowing suspense without a let-down; of sleepless nights, of plotting and

scheming, before another opportunity like this comes our way. Have you all gone crazy?

ANNENKOV: In two days' time, as you know quite well, the Grand Duke will be going to the theatre again.

STEPAN: Two days during which we run the risk of being caught at any moment; why, you've said so yourself!

KALIAYEV: I'm off!

DORA: No, wait. (*To Stepan*) You, Stepan, could you fire point blank on a child, with your eyes open?

STEPAN: I could, if the Group ordered it.

DORA: Why did you shut your eyes then?

STEPAN: What? Did I shut my eyes?

DORA: Yes.

STEPAN: Then it must have been because I wanted to picture . . . what you describe, more vividly, and to make sure my answer was the true one.

DORA: Open your eyes, Stepan, and try to realise that the Group would lose all its driving force, were it to tolerate, even for a moment, the idea of children being blown to pieces by our bombs.

STEPAN: Sorry, but I don't suffer from a tender heart; that sort of nonsense cuts no ice with *me* . . . Not until the day comes when we stop sentimentalising about children will the Revolution triumph, and we be masters of the world.

DORA: When that day comes, the Revolution will be loathed by the whole human race.

STEPAN: What matter, if we love it enough to force our Revolution on it; to rescue humanity from itself and from its bondage?

DORA: And suppose mankind at large doesn't want the Revolution? Suppose the masses for whom you are fighting won't stand for the killing of their children? What then? Would you strike at the masses, too?

STEPAN: Yes, if it were necessary, and I would go on striking at them until they understood . . . No, don't misunderstand me; I, too, love the people.

DORA: 'Love', you call it. That's not how love shows itself.

STEPAN: Who says so?

DORA: *I* say it.

STEPAN: You're a woman, and your idea of love is . . . well, let's say, unsound.

DORA (*passionately*): Anyhow, I've a very sound idea of what shame means.

STEPAN: Once, and once only, in my life I felt ashamed of myself. It was when I was flogged. Yes, I was flogged. The knout—you know what that is, don't you? Vera was there beside me and she killed herself, as a

protest. But I . . . I went on living. So why should I be ashamed of anything, now?

ANNENKOV: Stepan, all of us love you and respect you. But whatever private reasons you may have for feeling as you do, I can't allow you to say that everything's permissible. Thousands of our brothers have died to make it known that everything is *not* allowed.

STEPAN: Nothing that can serve our cause should be ruled out.

ANNENKOV (*angrily*): Is it permissible for one of us to join the police and play a double game, as Evno proposed to do? Would *you* do it?

STEPAN: Yes, if I felt it necessary.

ANNENKOV (*rising to his feet*): Stepan, we will forget what you've just said, for the sake of all that you have done for us and with us . . . Now, let's keep to the matter in hand. The question is whether, presently, we are to throw bombs at those two children.

STEPAN: Children! There you go, always talking about children! Cannot you realise what is at stake? Just because Yanek couldn't bring himself to kill those two, thousands of Russian children will go on dying of starvation for years to come. Have you ever seen children dying of starvation? I have. And to be killed by a bomb is a pleasant death compared with that. But Yanek never saw children starving to death. He saw only the Grand Duke's pair of darling little lap-dogs. Aren't you sentient human beings? Or are you living like animals for the moment only? In that case by all means indulge in charity and cure each petty suffering that meets your eye; but don't meddle with the Revolution, for its task is to cure all sufferings present and to come.

DORA: Yanek's ready to kill the Grand Duke because his death may help to bring nearer the time when Russian children will no longer die of hunger. That in itself is none too easy for him. But the death of the Grand Duke's niece and nephew won't prevent any child from dying of hunger. Even in destruction there's a right way and a wrong way—and there are limits.

STEPAN (*vehemently*): There are no limits! The truth is that you don't believe in the Revolution, any of you. (*All, except Kaliayev, rise to their feet.*) No, you don't believe in it. If you did believe in it sincerely, with all your hearts; if you felt sure that, by dint of our struggles and sacrifices, some day we shall build up a new Russia, redeemed from despotism, a land of freedom that will gradually spread out over the whole earth; and if you felt convinced that then and only then, freed from his masters and his superstitions, Man will at last look up towards the sky, a god in his own right—how, I ask you, could the deaths of two children be weighed in the balance against such a faith? Surely you would claim for yourselves the right to do anything and everything that might bring that great day nearer! So now, if you draw the line at killing these two

children, well, it simply means you are not sure you have that right. So, I repeat, you do *not* believe in the Revolution.

(*There is a short silence. Kaliayev, too, rises to his feet.*)

KALIAYEV: Stepan, I am ashamed of myself—yet I cannot let you continue in this vein. I am ready to shed blood, so as to overthrow the present despotism. But, behind your words, I see the threat of another despotism which, if ever it comes into power, will make of me a murderer—and what I want to be is a doer of justice, not a man of blood.

STEPAN: Provided justice is done—even if it's done by assassins—what does it matter which you are? You and I are negligible quantities.

KALIAYEV: We are not, and you know it as well as anyone; in fact it's pride, just pride, that makes you talk as you are doing now.

STEPAN: My pride is my concern alone. But men's pride, their rebellion, the injustice that is done them—these are the concern of all of us.

KALIAYEV: Men do not live by justice alone.

STEPAN: When their bread is stolen, what else have they to live by?

KALIAYEV: By justice and, don't forget, by innocence.

STEPAN: Innocence? Yes, maybe I know what that means. But I prefer to shut my eyes to it—and to shut others' eyes to it, for the time being—so that one day it may have a world-wide meaning.

KALIAYEV: Well, you must feel very sure that day is coming if you repudiate everything that makes life worth living today, on its account.

STEPAN: I am certain that that day is coming.

KALIAYEV: No, you can't be as sure as that . . . Before it can be known which of us, you or I, is right, perhaps three generations will have to be sacrificed; there will have been bloody wars, and no less bloody revolutions. And by the time that all this blood has dried off the earth, you and I will long since have turned to dust.

STEPAN: Then others will come—and I hail them as my brothers.

KALIAYEV (*excitedly, raising his voice*): 'Others' you say! Quite likely you are right. But those *I* love are the men who are alive today, and walk this same earth. It's they whom I hail, it is for them I am fighting, for them I am ready to lay down my life. But I shall not strike my brothers in the face for the sake of some far-off city, which, for all I know, may not exist. I refuse to add to the living injustice all around me for the sake of a dead justice. (*In a lower voice, but firmly*): Brothers, I want to speak to you quite frankly and to tell you something that even the simplest peasant in our backwoods would say if you asked him his opinion. Killing children is a crime against a man's honour. And if one day the Revolution thinks fit to break with honour, well, I'm through with the Revolution. If you decide that I must do it, well and good; I will go to the theatre when they're due to come out—but I'll fling myself under the horses' feet.

STEPAN: Honour is a luxury reserved for people who have carriages-and-pairs.

KALIAYEV: No. It's the one wealth left to a poor man. You know it, and you also know that the Revolution has its code of honour. It's what we all are ready to die for. It's what made you hold your head up, Stepan, when they flogged you, and it's behind what you have been saying to us today.

STEPAN (*shrilly*): Keep quiet! I forbid you to speak of that!

KALIAYEV (*losing his temper*): Why must I keep quiet? I took it lying down when you said I didn't believe in the Revolution. Which was as good as telling me that I was ready to kill the Grand Duke for nothing; that I was a common murderer. I let you say that—and somehow I kept my hands off you!

ANNENKOV: Yanek!

STEPAN: It's killing for nothing, sometimes, not to kill enough.

ANNENKOV: Stepan, none of us here agrees with you. And we have made our decision.

STEPAN: Then I bow to it. Only, let me tell you once again that squeamishness is out of place in work like ours. We're murderers, and we have chosen to be murderers.

KALIAYEV (*losing all self-control*): That's a lie! I have chosen death so as to prevent murder from triumphing in the world. I've chosen to be innocent.

ANNENKOV: Yanek! Stepan! That's enough of it. The Group has decided that the slaughter of these children would serve no purpose. We must start again from the beginning, and be ready for another try at it in two days' time.

STEPAN: And supposing the children are there again?

KALIAYEV: Then we shall await another opportunity.

STEPAN: And supposing the Grand Duchess is with the Duke?

KALIAYEV: *Her* I shall not spare.

ANNENKOV: Listen!

(*A rumble of carriage-wheels. Kaliayev is drawn irresistibly to the window. The carriage approaches, rattles past, recedes.*)

VOINOV (*looking at Dora, who has come towards him*): Well, Dora, that settles it; we'll have to make another try . . .

STEPAN (*disdainfully*): Yes, Alexis, another try! . . . But of course we must do something for our precious honour!

(*Translated by Stuart Gilbert*)

5

LITTLE DOG LOST

SHIRLEY JACKSON

IT was after two o'clock, the slowest hour of the afternoon in the small cocktail lounge and bar. There was only one man at the bar and he was drunk. The bar-tender, moving about quietly among bottles and glasses, straightening, wiping, sighing, paused now and then to look quietly at the man sitting at the end of the bar. Occasionally the man saw the bar-tender looking at him; at these times he would gesture and the bar-tender would move on down the bar, standing quietly on the inside, looking at the man on the outside.

'What time is it?' the man would ask, or: 'Do you think I should have another drink, sir?'

To which the bar-tender would answer, after thinking a minute: 'Ten minutes past two', or: 'If you think you should, sir.' The 'sir' was a courteous gesture; the bar-tender usually called his customers 'Jack' or 'mister'; but this one called the bar-tender 'sir'; it was one gentleman to another.

At three exactly a boy came in selling papers; he went up to the man sitting at the bar and said 'paper?' The man shook his head, and the boy handed the bar-tender a paper and ran out.

'Have a look at your paper?' the man sitting at the bar said to the bar-tender. Silently the bar-tender handed over the folded paper. The man spread it out, looked at it stupidly for a minute, and then shook his head. 'Get a little mixed up unless I keep drinking,' he said to the bar-tender. 'Can't read so well.'

The bar-tender nodded. 'Know how you feel,' he said, and moved down to the other end of the bar. The man sitting at the bar shook his head again, and then began turning the pages of the paper rapidly, not looking at anything in particular. Once he stopped, read for a minute, putting his face close to the paper, and then looked up at the barman. 'Superman,' he said wistfully. 'Every day'. He went on turning the pages over rapidly.

The barman looked at the door and sighed.

The man sitting at the bar was reading down a page. 'Hey,' he said. 'Listen to this. Listen, hey.' The bar-tender came slowly down inside the bar, waiting. 'Listen,' the man said. 'Here's an ad., listen. "Single woman,

refined, college graduate, desires living companion, interested in music, books, painting. Five-room apartment, fine library . . ". ' The man sitting at the bar paused, thinking. 'You know something?' he demanded.

'What?' said the bartender.

'Bet she . . . bet that woman who sent in that ad. . . . She sure must have plenty.'

'Those ads. don't cost so much,' the bar-tender said. 'Girl I know lost a little dog, sent in an ad., didn't cost so much.'

'Really?' the man sitting at the bar said, interested. 'Ever find it?'

'Nope,' the bar-tender said, shaking his head mournfully, 'never found it. She never did see that little dog again.'

The man at the bar had gone back to his paper. ' "Interested in music, books, painting," ' he read. 'There's a lady I should have married.'

'Sure thing,' the bar-tender said.

' "Fine library," ' the man sitting at the bar said. 'I sure do love books. She must have plenty, that lady.'

He handed the paper back to the bar-tender. 'Did I ever tell you about the girl I married?' he asked the bar-tender. The bar-tender shook his head. 'Well,' the man sitting at the bar began, 'I guess she was about the nicest girl I ever saw. I met her when we were in college. And we got married and we had a nice place, all fixed up. She used to like it, that place. Used to walk around all day in that place we had, mixing drinks, playing the piano, looking at pictures. She was an artist, and she used to play the piano. And we got married and we had a little girl.'

'Little girl, huh?' the bar-tender said.

'Prettiest little girl you ever saw.'

'So?' the bartender said.

'Nothing,' the man sitting at the bar said. 'Never happened. Never got married and had a house and a little girl, made it all up.'

'Okay with me,' the bar-tender said.

'Never even went to college,' the man sitting at the bar went on. 'Never had a piano.'

'Oh, well,' the bar-tender said.

'Say,' the man at the bar reached out for the paper the bar-tender was still holding. 'Let me look a minute.' He unfolded the paper to the ad. he had read before. 'Like I thought,' he said, 'listen here: "Five-room apartment, fine library, call Miss Montgomery, afternoons." She even gives her 'phone number,' he said, staring at the bar-tender.

'That's so people can call her,' the bar-tender said, 'afternoons'.

'It's after noon now,' the man sitting at the bar said.

'Twenty past three,' the bar-tender said.

The man sitting at the bar got down off his stool. 'Better call right away,' he said.

'Pretty late,' the bar-tender said.

The man left the bar and went into the phone-booth, carefully closing the door after him. The bar-tender watched him search his pockets for a nickel, consult the paper for the number, and then dial laboriously. Then the bar-tender sighed again, and regarded his nails. After a few minutes the man came out of the phone-booth, went back to his seat at the bar, and handed the bar-tender the paper.

'Nobody home?' the bar-tender asked.

'She was home,' the man said, 'I guess she must of been tired or something.'

'Probably been answering the phone all day.'

'I guess so. I guess that's what was wrong,' the man said. 'I guess I sort of figured she was waiting for me to call.'

'That girl I spoke of a while back,' the bar-tender said, 'that girl lost the little dog. She must of had fifty phone calls and letters right off.'

'Never found the dog, though?' the man said.

'She never did see that little dog again,' the bar-tender said.

'Never did see it again', the man repeated. He shrugged. 'I guess it hardly pays to put in an ad. at all these days.'

THE DEFEAT OF COMMUNISM IS INEVITABLE

JAMES BURNHAM

IF we weigh in a static balance the results achieved between 1946 and 1949, in the struggle for the world, we shall record a net gain for the Communists. The Chinese addition much exceeds the half-loss of Yugoslavia, and the many other items pretty well cancel each other out. A static balance, however, is not a proper instrument for historical measurement. History is temporal, dynamic; it is the direction, the trend that counts. Two men who are at the level of the sixtieth floor of the Empire State Building are not in identical condition if one is rising in an elevator, and the other has just jumped off the parapet. In a pneumonia patient, the meaning of a body temperature of 104° depends upon whether the patient is getting well, or dying.

Dynamically considered, the years 1946–9 show a net *trend* against the Communists. If the Communists are not yet losing—and they are not—their rate of advance has at least been slowed. For all temporal phenomena, it is this that is the most significant index. When the rate of advance, the 'growth curve', begins to flatten, we can reasonably wonder whether it is not approaching its maximum, and the start of its decline.

The principal cause of this reversal of trend has been the change in the attitude and policy of the United States. I once more insistently repeat that the present policy of the United States is inadequate; but I again also repeat that the direction of change of United States policy since 1946 is correct: correct, that is to say, in relation to the world power equilibrium. Both halves of this estimate are essential to its truth; either alone is a falsification.

Though the change in United States policy is the principal factor, an analogous change has also, in varying degrees, taken place elsewhere. The anti-Communist resistance has begun hardening on a world scale, as when the body begins forming an indurated wall against an advancing abscess, or a loose spring, so easily pushed at first, begins to assert its latent tension.

This process has taken place more quickly, and gone further, than I anticipated when, in 1946, I wrote *The Struggle for the World*. It is true that the reversal of trend is by no means firmly established. It is true that the curve of development is not smooth, but rather the resultant of vacillations, of irregular peaks and valleys. Nevertheless, the present pattern of the graph is unmistakable.

Let us then ask: will the present trend continue? In other words: will the objective be attained—if not the wider objective of a democratic world order, at least the narrower and specific objective of the defeat of world Communism, with which this book is primarily concerned? The answer to this question, hazardous enough with respect to the facts, is also psychologically intricate. The answer we give may itself alter the facts.

If we say, 'No, the objective will not, or probably will not, be attained', then we may induce attitudes of discouragement or despair which in turn will adversely affect the struggle for the objective. Shortly before the Communist Czechoslovakian coup of February 1948, I received a letter from a Czech with whom I had been occasionally corresponding. In first writing me, he had described himself as 'not important', an ordinary worker in an office. In this last letter (no reply could be risked), he told me that he had managed to get a copy of *The Struggle for the World*, the publication and sale of which had of course been prohibited in Czechoslovakia. After discussing it for several pages, he ended, in his approximation of English, to this communicable effect: We know what will soon happen here. But you, and the others, must make always clear to us that the victory of democracy is inevitable. I know that it is, because I can see *their* failure, but they have fooled many people with their talk of historical necessity.

You must make us believe that the victory of democracy is inevitable. We can hold out, if we believe that. If we do not, I am not so sure.

If, however, we make this reply to our question, and assert that the objective will, or will very probably or inevitably, be attained, we then run the opposite risk of quieting a sense of urgency, and arousing feelings of complacency. The imbecile statesmen and stupid publicists who congratulate themselves on their astuteness, and tell us that 'the cold war is being won' and 'the tensions are lessening', are playing into the hands of the Communists, lulling the public to sleep. After the disaster in China and the Soviet atomic explosion, after the Communists' 1949 demonstration of their control of two-thirds of the world's harbours, it is one's duty to sound the alarm, to rouse what of the public can be reached to the prospect of total defeat, enslavement, and death.

The two arguments neutralise each other. I shall therefore try to consider the question, briefly, on its merits.

II

A candid survey will, I think, show that our side—that is, the democratic side,[1] the side led by the United States and including all other nations, peoples, and persons who are sure to stand with the United States—is at present superior to the Communist side in all relevant major factors except two. These two are: strategic position and political leadership. In everything else that bears on the decision, not only in economic plant and technology, but in science, invention, culture, adaptability, health, usable (not merely theoretical) reserves, both of material resources and of human energies, we are at present better, and in most instances immensely better.

The Soviet base is constructed on the best strategic position that exists on the surface of the earth. It is not advisable to dismiss this advantage. Nevertheless, we may properly qualify its importance. Strategic position is, after all, a static, not a dynamic, factor. New techniques of long-distance warfare, and of subversive warfare, have reduced its relative weight. And strategic position is never in itself decisive: there is no position that cannot be taken, if sufficient intelligence, determination, and power are brought to bear against it. The possession of the superior strategic position sometimes proves a disadvantage in the long run. It can prompt carelessness, and promote that guarantor of ultimate defeat, a defensive point of view.

The entire question, therefore, turns on politics, on the quality of the political leadership. Assuming the continuing superiority of Communist politics, we may ask: can political strength overcome all the other relative weaknesses? On the evidence of history, we must answer that, if the disparity is great enough, it can. This is proved by the history of almost all

[1] There is no demagogy in calling this 'the democratic side'. Democracy is a matter of degree, not an absolute. In spite of the fact that 'our side' includes reactionaries and dictators, and in spite of the fact that it may be compelled to restrict freedoms further during the course of the struggle, it is and will remain incomparably *more* democratic, *more* free, than the Communist side.

tribes, races, peoples, or nations which started (as all groups must) from little and went on to greatness. At the beginning, by the nature of the case, each was inferior to its older rivals in almost everything except leadership. (I should add that political leadership is not necessarily identical with the presence of great individual political leaders. Certain attitudes of the group can produce, or rather find and select, an effective leadership, or compel an existing leadership to become effective; whereas different group attitudes may favour, or almost guarantee, mediocre leadership.) However, if the disparity in political leadership is less than very great, then the other factors will outweigh it, and the side with the poorer politics can win.[1] Even now, the inferiority of democratic to Communist political leadership is not so considerable as to make democratic victory impossible. A comparatively minor improvement in our politics would heavily swing the balance. This is why I wrote, in *The Struggle for the World*, that, 'with a determined leadership in, and by, the United States . . . the policy of democratic world order would prove successful.'

The problem, then, can be reduced to the question: will our politics improve?—I refer to our international politics; our ward-heeling politics are too good already.

Political ability is a synthesis of knowledge (partly native talent, or intuitive knowledge), intelligence, and will. Presumably the amount of intelligence and native talent distributed among us is on the average equal to that distributed among the enemy. At least, this average equality would follow from Mendelian principles, which are still permissible for a bourgeois analyst, though they lead to the concentration camp in the Soviet Union. Our knowledge about matters relevant to the present political struggle is increasing, and will certainly continue to increase. The crux, then, is in the will.

Does the United States *choose* to win? Can it make the necessary *decision*? Is it going to have, at the required tension, the *will* to survive? The answer to this triply-phrased single question is the determinant of the future. There are those, not only among the Marxists but among ourselves, who reply that the United States has already reached a stage of cultural decadence in which the needed will has vanished. This conclusion is implicit in the theories of 'the mature economy' and 'the closing of the frontier'; it is supported, so it is argued, by such symptoms as 'materialism', 'aesthetic barrenness', 'cosmopolitanism', social separatism, cynical indifference to patriotism, and so on.

To try to answer, for myself, this question, was among the motives that led me to take, in 1948–9, a slow, twenty-thousand-mile trip through the United States. Once out of the often brilliant but ingrown intellectual circles of the North Eastern seaboard, which draw their spiritual fuel from Europe and the Soviet Union, rather than from America, and whose

[1] I am inclined to think, for example, that the German leadership, both military and civilian, in the First World War, was superior to that of the Allies. In most other major factors the Allies had the clear advantage.

members have for the most part never seen a factory in Detroit, an oil well in Texas, the vegetables in the Imperial Valley, a grain field in the Big Bend, range land in Wyoming, fruit along Hood River, ore ships crowding the Sault, copper mines in Utah, the generators at Grand Coulée, steel mills at Gary, logging in Oregon, chemical works at Beaumont, not these or the people who man them; once looking at America and not reading about it, the direct impression becomes gradually too clear for interpretative doubt. Some of the symptoms magnified by the theorists of decadence are undoubtedly there. They are seen in context to be signs, not of melancholia and cynical old age, but of disturbed and disturbing adolescence. The United States is not, not by centuries, ready to quit. The United States is, in Mackinder's meaning, *a going concern*; and a young concern. It may be that Western civilisation as a whole is old and decadent—relatively old, that is to say, on the vast time scale of the histories of civilisations. An impressive case has been made out by Spengler and Toynbee. If so, the United States is the youngest child of Western civilisation, its Joseph, who has not only his own manhood ahead, but the chance through his strength to revivify his parent. The death even of civilisations as a whole is not decreed by any unchallengeable court. Civilisations die, in truth, only by suicide.

The uneasiness of the United States is not that of the awareness of death, but, rather, the tormenting pause before the leap into maturity. The will to exist and to advance is powerfully there, though for the moment in partial suspension. Because it is there, the suspension will be, sooner or later, resolved. The political question will be answered; the objective attained: at greater cost, perhaps, and greater delay and suffering than need be; but attained.

I have, a number of times in the past, discussed the problem of 'inevitability'. For anyone at all trained in methodology, it is an easy assignment to show that no statement about future events can be asserted as 'inevitable'. What we say about the future (or about events past and present as well, for that matter) can never be certain from a scientific and descriptive point of view; it is always more or less 'probable', on the evidence. From this point of view, we may conclude that the defeat of world Communism is, on the evidence, probable. Just when, under what circumstances, and with what measure of benign or disastrous indirect results brought about through that defeat, is not clear from the evidence. But an objective assessment of the evidence does not seem to leave much doubt that the ultimate defeat is itself very probable.

This descriptive interpretation of the word 'inevitable' is, however, trivial, a mere exercise in linguistics. The significant meaning of 'inevitable' is not as a description of facts (to which it has, in reality, no application) but as an expression of will. When a captain, before a battle, proclaims to

his soldiers, 'Our victory is inevitable', he is not so naïve as to mean that the victory is, as a matter of scientific fact, objectively certain. If that were his meaning, he would not bother to address them. What he is doing through the word 'inevitable' is to unify and express the *resolution* not to yield, to fight to the end.

The defeat of Communism, probable on the facts, is also *inevitable*, because there are enough determined men in the world—and their number daily grows—who have so resolved. The knowledge and intelligence, which enter into the synthesis of politics, are still needed in order to make that defeat as fruitful as possible a victory, as sparing as possible of blood and treasure. But the issue is no longer in doubt. Doubt is vanquished by the act of will which makes the decision. The future becomes servant, not master.

LETTER FROM AMERICA

ERIC ESTORICK

A REMARKABLE change has taken place in America since the end of the Second World War. Aware that the United States has emerged as the greatest power in the world, most Americans—especially her statesmen and business men, are rediscovering a birth of affection for Great Britain and the Commonwealth. This is due to admiration, fear and ties of history and culture.

There have been few circumstances in America's history comparable with those of today. The facts are terrific and yet simple. The United States has become the great imperial metropolis of the world. Her productive power has reached such enormous proportions that all the nations of the earth are dwarfed in comparison. Forty-eight states, covering the most highly industrialised and economically developed territory of millions of square miles, in relation to the rest of the world, function as a single national and imperial unit. It is doubtful if Americans realise that, when Lincoln and the North triumphed in the Civil War, their greatest triumph consisted not in the abolition of slavery, significant and important as that undoubtedly was, but in preventing the breakaway of the Southern states, in preserving the Union of the states. By that triumph they did what the British longed to do with their Empire but could not. Try as the British might to make their Empire into a single unit, they could not.

The Union of the forty-eight states of America signified the birth of an empire nation, while at every step in the evolution of the British Empire a new nation was born on its periphery, challenging the supremacy of the Mother Country, creating its own economy, staking its own claims, expressing its own interests and setting itself its own independent aims. The culmination of this evolution is in the creation of The Commonwealth. It is being recognised increasingly that the birth of the American empire as an economic and political unit, with all the inner states geographically contiguous, with their boundaries obliterated and their peoples merging into one nation with a single citizenship, was an historical declaration for which the British Empire did not possess the prerequisites. It marked the beginning of the end of the imperialism of the British Empire which, at the time of America's founding, deemed it possible to spread a nation's power to the ends of the earth and subordinate them to the interests and government of those who stayed at home. But it took two centuries to complete the process of conceding self-government in home affairs and the retention of power in foreign affairs until the last strands of imperial control, by the United Kingdom, began to break in 1914, when for the last time the British Monarch declared war for the whole of the British Empire.

II

That war signalled the end of many things. Britain came out of the war victorious over Germany, but historically defeated in the struggle for world power by the U.S.A. 'Wise men' the world over saw an 'inevitable war' in the offing between the old power and the new. They saw a head-on collision when really there was an eclipse. They were still thinking of the British Empire as a unit, operating under single direction, although the devolutionary process had already gone so far that five dominions were independently represented in the Peace Conference and the relative strengths of the British Empire and the U.S.A. were such that war between the old and new empires was ruled out of the realm of practicability.

In productive power America was, at the end of the First World War, far ahead of Britain. At the Washington Conference of 1922 she forced Britain to accept naval equality and abrogate her alliance with Japan. The Second World War rounded off the story of changing power relations between the two empires already unfolded in the First World War. At the end of the Second World War, the United States had a navy greater than all the navies of the world put together. Britain went into the First World War a creditor nation and came out of it owing the United States more than a billion pounds. The Second World War provided America with a greater stimulus than the First World War, while simultaneously it cracked the foundations of British power. The wars did not touch American shores, nor did aircraft bomb her factories or her towns and cities or destroy any of her industries. Her productive power was multiplied and her production equalled more than half the world's total production.

Historians and political scientists may moralise and justify on these grounds that, at the end of the Second World War, Britain was nearly four and a quarter million pounds on the debit side of the Lend Lease account and a further billion pounds in debt to America by 1946. But there the facts rest. To these great sums must be added all the Marshall Aid which Britain has received since this plan came into operation. No part of these sums is likely to be repaid. However these facts be reviewed, approved or disapproved, they reveal and emphasise the completeness of the eclipse of Great Britain and the whole British Empire by the U.S.A. If we measure their respective strengths in terms of military power, the eclipse is more complete. Britain could no more contemplate war against the United States than a domestic cat could contemplate war with a tiger. Indeed, from a purely military point of view, the United Kingdom is looked upon as an aerodrome outpost off the shores of Europe and her colonies and the dominions of the Commonwealth as strategic calling stations of her global strategy.

Americans see three empires—the U.S.S.R., the British Empire and the United States—standing astride the world, looking at each other, jealous, fearful and suspicious. They watch the leaders of these powers anxious and afraid, because they know that upon these powers hangs the fate of all mankind. They saw these powers proclaim themselves the United Nations, as they emerged victorious from the Second World War, and create an organisation to express their unity. Hardly had the last shot of that war been fired than the United Nations ceased to be united and their international organisation appeared to become an umbrella under which the three great empires could line up in disputation.

III

The hostility generated by these power differences has resulted in an increased nationalism in the United States. Fear, on the other hand, engendered by a growing awareness that America and Americans must assume greater responsibility for the privilege of greatness, has evoked a conscience for internationalism. Both these attitudes are battling each other in the American arena today and have had the effect of rending American intellectual life from top to bottom.

Not long ago there was a clearly-defined group of American intellectuals who more or less freely expressed themselves in literature, journalism, the arts and politics. Books were written with an eye to discovering and expressing the truth about some situation, some phase of reality or even how the world at large was changing from day to day. They were written without fear, with assertiveness, bravado and, perhaps, naïveté. Novels were vehicles of social revelation, dreams of unborn Utopias, the playground of contending personalities, ideologies, social creeds, intellectual stirrings, the solving of problems, without the fear that someone was looking over your shoulder ready to stick a label on your brow that would mark you out as

an intellectual leper who must 'ring the Lazarus bell' as you approach your neighbour. A journalist with no axe to grind, and no particular ideology of a doctrine, party or state, to get across, could find a market for his wares. He may have been an independent liberal voice following in the tradition of Steffens, Tarbell, and even the earlier Lippmann.

These days seem no more. The entire fraternity of intellectuals, from the highest theoreticians of the atomic age down to the penny-a-line scribbler, is living in an atmosphere of anxiety, inhibition and doubt. With all the power that Americans feel, ranging from the hypomanic mood of the beneficent Maecenus spreading his monetary largesse through the world to the false modesty of 'just getting along', they have passed also into a state of fear. This has increased with the disclosures of the Hiss, Coplon, and Fuchs trials—all related to espionage and security, all involving 'intellectuals'. The freethinkers have become intellectually paralysed and decimated as a social entity. This does not mean that the state has become the great engine of imperial government or an organised machine for policing the minds of its servants and purging them with the poison of fear. Such a mood may have prevailed in Washington during the brief period after the war when the Republican Party dominated Congress. It is not the prevailing mood today. On the other hand, political parties are, to a much lesser degree than previously, the organisation of people in pursuit of a programme of social and political change and are becoming instead ideological machines moulding people according to ideological loyalties. They are becoming increasingly political-religious institutions in which faith functions more than sight, and passion and prejudice, fostered by groups with specific interests, are set in motion with fear. While the political parties become religious, the churches become increasingly political.

So profound and far-reaching has been the effect of these trends arising from post-war psychological conditions that confidence in one's intellectual colleagues and companions has been challenged. Suspicion of 'treachery' is prevalent, from the heads of atom bomb plants down through the whole gamut of industry. And the recent trials have evoked little reason for fear to diminish.

If this new historical situation has had the effect of sterilising a host of America's writers, it has also created a new school of men who write with tongue in cheek, or another which, having abandoned liberal principles, is caught up with the power complex and in its writings is becoming the exponent of a great-power America to be a saviour in the modern world.

SARTRE AND BAUDELAIRE

MICHAEL HAMBURGER

THERE cannot be many kinds of criticism to which Baudelaire has not been subjected: philosophers, psychologists, theologians, moralists and immoralists, poets, novelists and professional critics, surrealists, classicists and Romanticists, Communists, democrats and monarchists have given him their attention. All his eccentricities, all his abnormalities have been faithfully recorded, classified and analysed; already before the recent war a Freudian psycho-analyst, Dr. René Laforgue, made him the pretext of a long and merciless study, so that we are familiar enough with Baudelaire the sadist, Baudelaire the masochist, Baudelaire the mother-fixated, Baudelaire the fetishist, Baudelaire the *voyeur*, in short, a Baudelaire afflicted with every possible perversion, as well as with impotence.

M. Jean-Paul Sartre's monograph[1] may be less embarrassing to readers who have not made their peace with Freud; but it is incomparably more destructive than any Freudian analysis could ever be. M. Sartre's attack is more formidable because it seems to penetrate to the essential Baudelaire, the individual and the artist. The Freudian libido is a thing so universal and so impersonal that a poet's reputation can easily survive the orthodox prying of psycho-analysis; whatever monstrosities may be brought to light, we may be sure that these do not account for the poet's ability to write good verse. An Oedipus complex belongs to the same order of complaints as indigestion; if not general, it is at least common. Dryden used to purge himself before settling down to work: 'When I have a grand design, I ever take physic and let blood; for when you would have pure swiftness of thought and fiery flights of fancy, you must have a care of the pensive part: in fine, you must purge the belly!' All the psycho-analysts have done is to move the 'pensive part', or the part that determines personality, a little lower down the body; this slight innovation hardly merits the hue and cry that has been raised against it.

Occasionally even M. Sartre beats his victim with a crude Freudian axe; but this operation is no more than a preliminary softening up, an overture to more delicate incisions. It means only that M. Sartre is too conscientious a pathologist not to use every available instrument; and there is no doubt that he makes a thorough job of the post-mortem. If, at the end of it, we ask ourselves whether it was really worth-while, the answer is probably that an experiment justifies itself: even if we have not learned anything about

[1] Baudelaire. By Jean-Paul Sartre. Translated from the French by Martin Turnell. *Horizon*. 10s. 6d.

Baudelaire's poetry, we have at least given M. Sartre a chance to demonstrate his consummate skill as an analyst and to prove his point. Whether his point was worth proving at all, and whether it was worth proving at the expense of a man of genius, are questions which I am not qualified to answer.

M. Sartre's main argument is that 'men always have the kind of lives they deserve.' In the case of Baudelaire, this argument is certainly applicable. Yet I should like to ask M. Sartre how his generalisation applies to people who are crippled by accidents, imprisoned in concentration camps because of their race or class, to anyone, in fact, who is the victim of circumstances beyond his control. Does a man who contracts infantile paralysis *deserve* to do so? Or would M. Sartre deny that such a disease is a part of the man's life? These questions may be irrelevant; but since M. Sartre has gone to so much trouble to prove that his argument applies to Baudelaire, it is not unreasonable to question the truth of the argument itself.

It should be made clear that if, according to M. Sartre, men always have the kind of life they deserve, this is not so because he believes in Providence or any other guiding power; he believes that men are solitary and free. Being free, they are responsible only to themselves, and this responsibility entails choice. Baudelaire, he argues, had an ambivalent attitude to this freedom; more aware of it than most of us, he was afraid of it, and did his best to put off the moment of choice. He took care to remain dependent on his mother, his step-father and his guardians; in the same way, instead of 'a wider and more fruitful ethic which he should have invented himself', he accepted the existing ethical code, which condemned him. He wanted to be judged and condemned, so as to escape from his responsibility and his freedom. 'He was the man who felt most deeply his condition as a man, but tried most passionately to hide it from himself.' The kind of ethic which Baudelaire should have invented, it seems, was something like Gide's '*immoralism*'. Referring to the resolutions which Baudelaire made during the crisis of 1862 and at other periods of his life, M. Sartre writes: 'They were simply a system of rigid and strictly negative defences. Sobriety meant not taking intoxicants: chastity—not going back to those young women who gave him too kindly a welcome and whose names are preserved in his notebook; work—not putting off until tomorrow what could be done today; charity—not being irritable or bitter and not being indifferent to other people.' I cannot see that these resolutions are 'negative defences'; rather it seems to me that M. Gide's *immoralism* is a negative defence against a society which disapproves of his peculiarities. This does not mean that M. Gide's defiance is not admirable, but as far as morality consists in restraining one's impulses, it is always 'negative'. M. Gide's *immoralism*, if generally practised, would destroy everyone, and first of all, M. Gide himself; there would be nothing to prevent one of those who are outraged

by his books from doing to him what Lafcadio does to Fleurissoire in *Les Caves du Vatican*—pushing him out of a moving train. Needless to say, M. Gide himself has never seriously advocated *immoralism*; he has merely defended himself against the philistines. M. Sartre does not say that sobriety, chastity, industry and charity are negative virtues; he merely defines them in such a way that they appear meaningless and banal. The implication seems to be that every man should have his own ethical code —a very strange state of affairs, to put it mildly.

Another way in which Baudelaire tried to escape the necessity of choice was to turn himself into an object, to divide himself into two persons, one of whom was called upon to judge the other. 'Baudelaire was the man who chose to look upon himself as though he were another person; his life is simply the story of the failure of this attempt.' The super-ego is a familiar concept in Freudian psychology—not to mention anything as outmoded as a conscience; but M. Sartre invests the functioning of this part of Baudelaire's psyche with a special metaphysical significance by connecting it with his favourite terms, 'existence', 'being', 'consciousness' (*existence pour-soi*), 'non-consciousness' (*existence en-soi*), 'freedom', 'responsibility' and 'choice'. He writes of Baudelaire: 'Because he wanted at the same time to be and to exist, because he continually fled from existence to being and from being to existence, he was nothing but a gaping wound.' This, as far as I can see, means that Baudelaire did not, as men should, strive to rise from the state of passive non-consciousness (being) to a state of conscious, self-determined and responsible activity (existence), but both desired and feared the second state. 'Life is nothing more than a game; man has to choose his own end without waiting for orders, notice or advice,' M. Sartre writes. 'For a thoughtful person every enterprise is absurd. Baudelaire steeped himself in this sense of absurdity.' There is one thing to be said in Baudelaire's favour: he did not turn his sickness into a philosophy. A choice based on such premises as 'life is nothing more than a game', and 'let us remember that man is never anything but an imposture' (p. 80) is likely to be a desperate one: Fascism and Communism are two of the creeds which have sprung from such an attitude of mind. In both cases, what matters is the choice and the strict adherence to that choice once it is made —not the value of anything that may be achieved or the value of that which will be destroyed in the process: *ex nihilo nihil.* In certain situations, indecision is the last resort of noble minds: if Baudelaire 'steeped himself in the sense of absurdity', it was because he could not help it; but he never claimed that others too should make absurdity the basis of their thinking, and he refused to act. Perhaps he was right: perhaps he was justified in merely writing great poetry, in choosing not to choose.

M. Sartre also accuses Baudelaire of worshipping the past: 'He refused experience. Nothing came from the outside to change him and he learnt

nothing.' His works, it is true, show little development; but many great writers are more interested in recovering the past than in exploring an uncertain future. Memory and imagination are not only related, but, in the opinion of certain philosophers, identical; as for 'living in the present', this is nothing more than a phrase. It is extremely difficult to assess another man's experience; if the experiences of early life are powerful enough, nothing a man can do in later life, however unusual or exciting to others, will be an experience to him. As far as his works are concerned, it is completely irrelevant whether the experiences Baudelaire described in his poems belong to his youth or to his maturity (though M. Sartre would deny that Baudelaire ever attained maturity); but M. Sartre's criticism is a more serious one. He asserts not only that Baudelaire lived vicariously in the past, but that he confused the eternal with the past, the past with spirituality. If this is true, it applies equally well to many great poets: Rilke, too, had the gift of infusing his past with a quality that resembles spirituality. M. Sartre writes: 'Like Bergson's, Baudelaire's work might well be called *Matière et Mémoire*. It is because the universal past—and not merely the past of his consciousness—was seen to be a mode of being which was in complete conformity with his wishes. It *is* because it is unalterable and a pure object of passive contemplation; but at the same time it is *absent*, is out of reach, delicately faded; it possesses that ghostly being which Baudelaire called *spirit* and which was the only one with which the poet could come to terms.'

This evasion of 'existence' is connected by M. Sartre with Baudelaire's frigidity and with his sexual abnormalities. Baudelaire defined beauty as 'something ardent and sad, something slightly vague, leaving room for conjecture'—this conception of beauty, we are told, is bound up with Baudelaire's cult of dissatisfaction, his love of the unrealised, the absent and the incomplete . . .' It would seem that even his impotence was provoked by the fear of deriving *too much* pleasure from the sexual act. But, on the other hand, if he restrained himself in his pleasures, it was also because he remained unsatisfied on principle, because he had *chosen* to find what he called *volupté* in being unsatisfied rather than in possession. The end which he pursued was, as we know, that strange image of himself which was to be the indissoluble mirror of existence and being.'

We need not explore the vicious circle any further; all the other aspects of Baudelaire with which M. Sartre deals—his various perversions, his self-hatred, his narcissism, his exhibitionism, his desire to shock and to mislead, his femininity and his cult of 'dandyism'—bring us back to the initial weakness, his inability to live: 'Baudelaire chose a symbolic suicide; he killed himself gradually.' We may regard this statement as the last twist of the knife and leave the dissecting table with the satisfying thought that nothing remains to be done.

There is no reason why this book should not be read by those interested in M. Sartre's philosophy. As for Baudelaire, the mangled corpse presented by M. Sartre is not a suitable introduction to his work; but anyone already familiar with it should not be unduly shaken by the autopsy. Whatever M. Sartre may think about the past, it has its advantages: Baudelaire, being well embedded in it, is no longer vulnerable—and his works, though very much alive, are not affected by M. Sartre's study, which is not intended to be a contribution to literary criticism.

It is necessary, nevertheless, to consider the implications of M. Sartre's analysis, to recapitulate his achievement and the limitations of his approach. The concluding sentence is both a re-statement of the theme and a comment on M. Sartre's approach: 'Baudelaire was an experiment in a closed vase, something like the *homunculus* in the Second Part of *Faust*; and the quasi-abstract circumstances of the experiment enabled him to bear witness with unequalled *éclat* to this truth—the free choice which a man makes of himself is completely identified with what is called his destiny.' I have already dealt briefly with the theme itself: and there is no doubt that Baudelaire's personality determined the course of his life. The crucial question is to what extent we are free to impose our own choice on the data of personality; at times the impression created by M. Sartre's account of Baudelaire is the opposite of what he intended: then it seems that the weight of all those inherent horrors and defects left Baudelaire no freedom to choose his destiny.

In calling Baudelaire an experiment and comparing him to the *homunculus*, M. Sartre has told us nothing about Baudelaire, but a great deal about his own approach. It is clear that no man *is* an experiment; nor did Baudelaire refrain from physical suicide only in order to provide M. Sartre with material for a thesis, as M. Sartre's conclusion suggests. It is M. Sartre who has created the quasi-abstract circumstances of the experiment and placed Baudelaire in a closed vase: it follows that Baudelaire has lost much of his humanity in the process. There is no need to read the *Fleurs du Mal*, the *Petits Poèmes en Prose*, the *Paradis Artificiels* or the brilliant essays of *L'Art Romantique* to be quite certain that their author was more than the pitiable neurotic of M. Sartre's book; to regard any man as an experiment is to ignore the diversity and the contradictions that distinguish him from a mere abstraction. The abstraction of M. Sartre's book is labelled 'Baudelaire'; but any other specimen would have served his purpose. It so happens that Baudelaire's amazing lucidity has saved M. Sartre the trouble of discovering evidence which, in the case of other men, would not have been provided for him: Baudelaire was his own judge and his own prosecutor. All M. Sartre has had to do is to confirm the sentence on different grounds; while Baudelaire condemned himself because he respected Christian ethics and public morality, M. Sartre has condemned

him once more for that very reason. Yet there is a court of appeal which M. Sartre does not mention: it is reserved for great men, for those whose failings are inseparable from their achievement, whose very defeat has turned into a victory. Baudelaire himself knew of this court of appeal and never hoped for any other acquittal:

'Discontented with every one and discontented with myself. I would gladly redeem myself and elate myself a little in the silence and the solitude of night. Souls of those I have loved, souls of those I have sung, strengthen me, support me, rid me of lies and the corrupting vapours of the world; and you, O Lord God, grant me grace to produce a few good verses which will prove to myself that I am not the lowest of men, that I am not inferior to those whom I despise.'

RALPH GUSTAFSON

EPSTEIN

Heels well-grounded
He cleaves as bearded Exodus
The living rock.
At his stroke
Seas split.
On public pedestals
The glib romantic ride
And postures robed
In halls of habit sit.

Here in the falling afternoon
The twelve-year morning-glory climbs
The unsuspected sill
And our returns
Astonish thunder in a quiet house

Stuffed in a back-room,
Jesus roped
And Lazarus
The burst of suns
Between his thighs.

GASTRONOMICAL NOTES: WINES

HENRY KAHN

Thus every guest may drink and fill
As much or little as he will . . .

Or better pleased, to let it pass
Is cheerful with a moderate glass.

Moderation is the soul of pleasure, for wine loses its fascination when consumed in greater quantities than either the stomach or the wits can hold.

One sure way of over drinking is to buy wine by the glass or, say, six bottles for a special occasion, which must be consumed at once. This is the way to fog the brain and coat the tongue, but not enjoy the drink.

For a beer-drinking nation, the British are very fond of wine. I know we come third on the beer list, after Belgium and Germany; nevertheless Britain is still a testing-ground for claret, and even a Labour government agreed to lower the duty on champagne because it is loved and enjoys high favour in our island.

It is a pity, therefore, that Britons as a whole still buy their wine as and when they need it. I recently read that the Rome Wine Company of California had devised a diabolical system whereby glasses of wine can be sold at the grocers and a metal cap placed over the top of the glass. While I have not the slightest doubt that Californian wines are neither improved nor spoiled by this odd sales method (I remember being offered a Californian Chablis in New York which tasted like bad Sauterne), the whole idea of selling wine in this way is barbaric. The only way to enjoy one's drink is first to nurse it. Buy it by the case, place it with infinite care and at the right angle in its rack or metal bin, and watch over it like a child as it grows old and mellow. Give the bottle a little twist between the finger and thumb from time to time to help the sediment settle on the cork, for wine should always bathe the cork. In this way new friends are turned into old ones and enjoyment of the rich red grape is doubled and trebled.

I do not propose to go into the details of cellaring, for the simple reason that in these days one has neither the space, nor alas! the money (except in the case of the few), to equip great cellars. There are, however, one or two golden rules which should be followed and, after having offered them, to be followed or ignored, I shall discuss available vintages.

An old French proverb says: 'The cellar makes good wine', and although wine bought in bottles is well past the initial stages of its maturing, there is still time for it to improve. For this reason, care should be taken with the cellar itself. It should, for example, have a steady temperature around 55 degrees F. and as far as possible be protected against extreme heat and cold. This does not necessarily mean it must be underground. If it is no more than a shed facing north, for example, it may do very well, but in this case care should be taken to see that strong light does not penetrate its windows, for wine is delicate, and extremes are apt to spoil it. Finally, the cellar should be well ventilated. Air must not be allowed to grow stale, but the enthusiast must see that the required ventilation does not result in brusque changes of temperature.

Your cellar must also be fairly dry, so that corks do not rot; and avoid storing strong-smelling vegetables, such as onions, or kegs of vinegar in the cellar. Necessary as these are to the enjoyment of life, in their right places, of course, a wine-cellar is a holy of holies and no place for either.

Finally, place your bottles in the metal racks which have been securely installed, taking care that the angle is right, for, as already mentioned, the wine must bathe the cork, otherwise it may spoil. As to quantity, that is a matter for you to decide. An average of between 300 and 400 bottles should provide an interesting and enjoyable cellar.

Now you are ready to place your beauties in their separate places. You have, of course, with your initial order, taken care to buy at a highly responsible house whose advice can be valued and whose honesty is beyond reproach. For, alas! the slip betwixt cup and lip may originate with the original order. But more of that in a moment.

Just as librarians would not leave their books in general disorder to make the finding of their choice more difficult, so you should classify your wines carefully. See that your clarets and burgundies, once arranged, are clearly marked as to *château* or *domaine*, as well as the year. The same for your Loire wines, Beaujolais, Rhône wines, etc. By the way, bear in mind that liqueur wines, like muscat, malaga, etc., need not be kept in the cellar as they are often served iced, but that sherry and port wines are always served at cellar temperature.

I have not mentioned champagne because it is so different. Its maturing days are more or less over when you have bought it, for, once it has passed through its second bottling, it can be drunk at once. Further, unlike the red wines, it need not lie on its side. Perhaps one day I shall devote a complete article to this king of wines—or should I write queen?—since the Montrachet has already been crowned king.

Now a word about buying. In Britain you are fairly safe, but in France you may be unfortunate enough to stumble across a rogue out to cheat. Do not imagine for one moment that this is the rule; it is, indeed, the exception, and met only occasionally when buying from minor vintners or in dishonest restaurants. The rogues are encouraged by man's uncontrollable conceit. Believing he knows all there is to know about the grape, the wine-lover overlooks the fact that some know even more. But he is well protected by law and, when buying from a well-known house, the chances of fraud are non-existent. I shall not, therefore, discuss the various dishonest processes known as cutting, or importing fullness by the addition of glycerine, for these tricks are rare indeed. But do take care to look at the label when buying in France for shipping home. Naturally, if you buy in Britain, you are protected by the shipper. All Bordeaux worth nursing are château bottled and the label must clearly bear the words: *Mis en bouteilles au château.* Burgundies and other wines should bear the words: *Mis en bouteilles au domaine.* Do not buy wines with labels worded: *Mis en bouteilles par le propriétaire*, or *Mis en bouteilles en Bourgogne*, or yet *Mis en bouteilles dans nos chaix.* None of these offers the slightest guarantee.

In 1935, the *Institut National des Apéllations d'Origine* was set up to watch over quality and quantity, and you may be interested to know that the quantity of wine produced per hectare is watched. For example, only 25 hectolitres per hectare is permitted for the Sauternes, though for most other wines the amount allowed is about 45 hectolitres. The degree of alcohol is also watched carefully: 13 degrees for the Sauternes, 10 to 11 degrees for Burgundies, 12 degrees for Châteauneuf du Pape and so on. These few remarks should satisfy you that, when following the lines suggested, you cannot go wrong and are well protected.

Now that you are in the hands of a reliable house, you must decide what to buy. Being British, you will no doubt first wish to take a look at some clarets. You may be interested to know that King John, who was master of St. Emilion as well as Britain, ordained that the clarets from this region should be allowed into Britain without let or hindrance. Unfortunately this happy state of affairs has long since been swept into oblivion, but it might indeed have given the burghers of London and the lord in his castle the taste for these wonderful Bordeaux wines.

So much has been written about pre-war vintages that there is little point in discussing them here. I shall, therefore, start from 1941.

Space, alas! will not permit a close examination of all such wines. We must be content with a general survey and guide to buying.

The 1941 red Bordeaux were mediocre and therefore not worth touching. They were, in fact, too light. This is equally true of the whites, although some were better than others.

1942 was a good year. The reds were supple but developed quickly and are therefore unlikely to grow old gracefully; on the other hand, the whites were elegant to an extreme and I here suggest Graves as a perfect buy.

In 1943 Bordeaux gave us some slow-developing but very hopeful reds, which should be bought now for drinking, and

will also keep. Whites were also great in 1943 and certainly richer than in 1942.

1944 should be avoided. The wine is light and there was a lot of it, particularly the St. Emilions. If you are offered a good bargain, do not turn it down immediately. Taste it first. Some of these 1944 wines will improve. Keep away from the whites; these were patchy.

1945, bringing the first of the post-war wines, was a fine year. The reds have all the makings of stayers; they will keep and grow richer. The whites have been termed 'sumptuous' and almost equal to that great year 1929.

1946 fell short. The reds were altogether too light, though some had developing qualities. The whites should not be risked.

1947! What a year that was! One expert has even called the wines too rich. In any case the quality was incomparable, so snatch what you can. The whites, while not so good as the reds, are still extremely good.

Before going on to the Burgundies, I must remind you of one rule which I consider cardinal. White wines, on the whole, should not be bought to keep, for they are best drunk when young and fruity. My white wine list, therefore, is as much for reference as it is a guide. Whites as young as twelve months, or even less, served *frappé*, are a joy for ever.

Now for the Burgundians.

The quality of wine depends upon the quality of rain and sunshine, and the right time for harvesting grapes. Autumn weather, when grapes are ready for picking, plays an immensely important part in the final maturing of the juice. Nature, of late, has been mainly kind, and the Burgundy autumns, over the past few years, have been excellent. 1943, 1945, 1946 and 1947 have all been notable years.

1943, as already stated, was a very good year, the reds being fruity and distinguished. It is a wine easy to recognise. The whites possessed a splendid bouquet and were exceptionally elegant, the Montrachets and Meursaults standing out. They are obtainable now and should be bought, drunk and enjoyed.

1944 was disappointing. There was too much wine in Burgundy, as in Bordeaux and elsewhere. It was altogether too light and of poor colour. The whites are buyable, however. If Chassagne, Puligny and Meursault are available, as they should be, they might be bought, but not kept for too long.

1945 was quite remarkable in spite of early frost and some storms. The reds were powerful and fruity, the whites excellent. In some cases, however, the harvest was late, and this has tended to increase the power of the wines, giving a tendency to oxidisation. When buying these wines, the greatest care should be taken. Open a bottle and, if smoothness is lacking, forget it.

1946 produced another fine wine, although perhaps of variable quality. This is a year which cannot be taken on trust but when the wines are good, they are very good. The whites were also first class.

Finally we come to 1947, or the year which could not go wrong.

Burgundies and Bordeaux are easily obtainable in Britain. Other varieties, unfortunately, are not, but Beaujolais should be easy to find.

May I suggest for the Beaujolais: 1942: red and white, as both were supple; 1943: both red and white, both being excellent but by no means great; 1944: drinkable but no more: soothing to sip *en famille*; 1945 was a remarkable year for both red and white; 1946: very recommendable; 1947: first class for all wines, although the whites seem to have conserved their sugar. The reds, on the other hand, were quite exceptional.

But the wines of France are numerous indeed, and this short list of Bordeaux, Burgundies and Beaujolais is altogether insufficient. I propose, therefore, since summer is coming along, to offer a short list of wines which make good summer drinking: iced wines which slip down like a charm, and bring cool and contentment. These are wonderful to drink with a typical summer meal, say of roast chicken and salad and, if obtainable, should certainly be bought.

In summer we turn to white and *rosé* wines rather than to the reds. This has an advantage, since whites are best drunk young. There are many light red clarets, however, which make first-class drinking in summer. The 1941 and 1944 wines which are mentioned above are far from great,

and have disappointed the connoisseurs, yet still have their value as a light summer drink, and should be easily found.

My own choice for summer drinking is the Beaujolais, first because they are fruity, secondly because they are generally drunk while still young. The coral wines of Beaujolais make a perfect summer dinner wine, but, since these may not be obtainable in Britain, you can always choose from the Morgon, Chiroubles, Juliénas and, of course, the Moulin-à-vent, which is easily obtainable.

Not having the space to deal with the vast list of French wines, I shall include those which fit in the summer list. The wonders of the Loire, fruity and light, notably the Chinon and the Bourgueil, are well worth trying; the *Rosé* of Touraine and Anjou, well iced, can be a revelation on a hot day.

Chablis, Meursault, Mont-Graves, Pouilly-Fuisse, Pouilly-sur-Loire, Sancerre and the dry wines of Alsace are beauties not to be missed. All of these are dry. For serving with dessert, try the Sauternes, Barsac, Sainte-Croix-du-Mont, Montbazillac and, of course, champagne, the greatest of all.

Before closing, just one word more. Treat your wines with care. Uncork the reds an hour before serving and leave them in the room in which they are to be served. Decantering is largely a matter of choice, which can wait to be discussed in another article. Please remember that wine is not a manufactured drink, but a slow maturation of nature, a ripening of sunshine and rain. It is, indeed, all the four seasons in a bottle. And please remember that icing a white wine does not mean putting it in the refrigerator or putting ice in the wine. It means putting the wine on ice a little while before it is drunk.

So good luck if you decide to follow this modest advice on laying down your cellar. And since you will want to buy some champagne, remember the 1934 and 1937 vintages if you can still obtain them. 1941, 1942 and 1943 are certainly obtainable, and 1945 was the best year before 1947, which is expected to be magnificent, but is not yet ready for sale. It will not be available before next year or even 1952.

FILM NOTES

ROGER MANVELL

CHARLIE CHAPLIN is the only great artist of the film who has kept his place in the sun over so long a period. The late D. W. Griffith, who preceded him by a few years as a film-maker, ceased to be an effective artist by the mid-twenties, and Sergei Eisenstein, who died two years ago, did not begin to make his contribution to the art until Chaplin had been famous for ten years. The fact that, after four decades in Hollywood, he remains a British citizen, disgruntles some Americans and entitles him to be thought eccentric. A sign of the seriousness with which he has come to take himself in more recent years is that his name appears as Charles in the credit-titles of his later films—*Monsieur Verdoux*: producer, Charles Chaplin; director, Charles Chaplin; original story, Charles Chaplin; music composed by Charles Chaplin; Henri Verdoux, alias Varnay, alias Bonheur, alias Floray, played by Charles Chaplin.

As the humanity of his work deepened, the films he made began to space themselves out, until five years or even longer became the natural interval between each of his later productions: 'A Woman of Paris' (1923), 'The Gold Rush (1925), 'The Circus' (1928), 'City Lights' (1931), 'Modern Times' (1936), 'The Great Dictator' (1940), and 'Monsieur Verdoux' (1948).

He is now working on a film about the music-hall in Britain, in which he will appear as the late Mark Sheridan, the comedian. As usual, he is writing the script and composing the music for the film himself. Chaplin has been the single creative talent in every department of the composite art of the motion pictures he has directed since 1914, when he first began to make his own films for Mack Sennett at the Keystone Studios. The large fortune he made out of his early short films gave him a freedom of the screen enjoyed by few directors, and perhaps only equalled by that gained by Robert Flaherty, whose distinguished career in film-making has

been almost as long as that of Chaplin himself.

For his new film Chaplin is becoming a choreographer. He has created a ballet which is to be danced by Markova and Dolin. This, I think, is good news, but not really as surprising as it might seem to be when you first hear of it. For Chaplin himself developed the movements of a dancer in his earliest slapstick comedies. The deft beauty of his clowning depended not merely on split-second timing. When he took to space in the form of comic acrobatics, he showed all the verve of a dancer. In 'The Rink' and 'Easy Street' the chase sequences possess a rhythm and a bodily grace which raises them above the hard visual gags of ordinary slapstick clowning. In 'Sunnyside' Charlie parodied classical Greek dancing in a burlesque which is never far from appreciation of the original: in 'The Kid' the dream of the sublimated slum where everyone assumes the feathery attire of the angels develops into a gay pattern of movements, with the whole neighbourhood swinging about on wires! But it was in 'The Gold Rush' and 'The Great Dictator' that Chaplin's choreographic imagination worked most freely, first in the touching little dance of the two rolls which he sticks on forks and operates on a table with his chin lowered almost to his wrists, following their pirouettes up and down the table with twists and nods of his expressive face, and secondly in the pure ballet with the inflated rubber globe, which he dances in the part of Adenoid Hynkel, his fantastic impersonation of Hitler.

* * *

The other day I attended a private screening of a new Soviet Russian film 'Ballerina', which showed Galina Ulanova dancing in scenes from the Swan Lake ballet. This contained some of the best photography of the classical ballet dedesigned for the stage that I can remember having seen in any film. Two great problems face the transmutation (for that is what it amounts to) of the dance created for the stage to the medium of the screen.

Our bifocal vision enables us to appreciate depth on the theatre stage, and all that depth implies in the spatial relationship between objects placed at different distances from the spectator. The choreographer builds up the spatial movements of his dance, assuming his spectators are sitting in one place only, namely in front of the stage. Moments in a ballet are often astonishingly beautiful when seen from the side of the stage or from the flies about it. The dancers flow to and from each other like the movements of a flower expanding its petals to the sun in some slow-motion film. Yet these are not the viewpoints intended by the choreographer: they are the by-products of an even richer ensemble when the ballet is seen from the auditorium of the theatre.

Now the film offers the choreographer the multi-viewpoint at the same time as it robs him of real depth. When we look at the flat screen in a cinema, our bifocal habit of vision readily lends an *assumed* depth to the image which in fact it does not possess: we 'compensate', as the psychologists might put it, for this absence of the third dimension in the picture on the screen. But in fact the film-maker plays all the time upon this absence of depth to achieve dramatic pictorial effects, when, for example, a huge head and shoulders in the immediate foreground contrasts strongly with the little figure just seen coming in through the door in the distant background, an illusion of large contrasted with small which we should never get in a similar situation in ordinary life with our bi-focal adjustment of the scale of what is near to us in its relation to what is further off.

I apologise for all this theory, though anyone going to the cinema will see this optical trick put into practice in almost every film. Who has not seen that threatening head and shoulders in the shadows of some melodrama, with an unprepared hero approaching in the distance?

What has this to do with ballet for the film? Well, everything. First, the choreographer can design his dance to be seen from a variety of viewpoints and distances presented in turn upon the screen, and secondly, he can play with, and even distort, the values of perspective. He can, in fact, make the camera appear to join in the dance itself, by the tempo with which he assembles and presents the various shots in his film.

To film a stage ballet is to film something from a multitude of angles when it was only intended to be seen from one. To film a cine-ballet (to use a new term) is to make the eyes of the spectator join in the dance viewpoint by viewpoint, rhythm by rhythm.

I do not know if Chaplin will go so far as to try this technique, which is evidently far more elaborate than stage choreography. Robert Helpmann began to create a cine-ballet for Michael Powell's and Emeric Pressburger's film, 'The Red Shoes', which nevertheless often remained anchored to what were, properly speaking, stage effects. Some American musicals have contained sequences which expanded into the wider scope of cine-ballet. It remains to be seen what Chaplin's unique imagination will create for us in this relatively undeveloped, but very promising, branch of film art.

* * *

At the special cinema which is to be built on the South Bank of the Thames for the 1951 Festival of Britain, it is hoped to show some short stereoscopic or three-dimensional films during the course of the special festival programmes. In Moscow there has been a cinema open to the public for about three years which specialises in showing stereoscopic films only. In this cinema the illusion (for it is an illusion) of a genuine bi-focal experience of spatial depth replaces the flat image to which we are used in our ordinary film-going. The audience is not required to wear polarised spectacles, although it is necessary to hold the head in one position all the time in order to keep the vision 'in phase', as it were, with the multiple picture, which the film, with its twin images combined on a special screen, presents to the spectator. The stereoscopic system to be used in the 1951 Festival programme will, I understand, require the use of simple polarised spectacles.

When the stereoscopic film becomes generally used, the film-maker will have an added power—the ability to use movement *forward from* the plane of the screen and *backwards out* of it, as well as the simple movements across the screen which are all we have at present. People seeing ordinary motion pictures for the first time usually try to dodge the sudden movements of such violent objects as springing lions or speeding trains. Soon we shall all be jumping out of our seats in the face of the new illusion! Fists will plunge at us, villains leap at us, fish swim round us, horses jump over us. But we shall no doubt soon enjoy the new sensation with equanimity, indeed with a certain pleasurable masochism. That seems to be the way of humanity when it plays with its more alarming toys.

Stereoscopy will offer a great additional range to the ballet-film. What elevations, what fouettés, what pirouettes, what arabesques will become possible by means of this instrument, which can control our spatial experience! And what a measure of taste will be necessary in choreographer, dancer and film-maker to keep these violent powers within the reasonable framework of art! It will be only too easy to turn stereoscopic films into mere visual acrobatics, just as the coming of sound turned moving pictures for a while into the dull and quiet accompaniment to some ear-splitting sound track, clamorous with telephone bells, car accelerations, slamming doors and the excited screechings of show-girls. Then it will be absorbed into the general practice of film-making, well set to share with television the mastery of our future civilisation.

* * *

Let us for a moment go back some thirty thousand years to the earliest 'kinema' so far discovered. A few weeks ago a friend and I went down into the now famous caves of Lascaux near Montignac in the Dordogne department of south-western France. We were shown round by the youth Ravidat, who was instrumental in discovering them during the war. These handsome caves, shaped like a very dislocated letter H, were in all probability some sort of temple where men came to paint pictures on the walls and ceilings by the light of primitive lamps, giving only a single flame, like a weak candle.

The cave is a crowded gallery of animal portraits: the only man to be found is painted in a cellar-cave lying below the main natural structure. You climb down an iron ladder to see him lying prone before a disembowelled bison, which is

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transfixed with a javelin. He wears a strange bird-mask, and his outstretched arms show that he is dead.

The whole effect of this wonderful gallery of paintings is of violent movement suddenly transfixed into stillness, like a motion picture halted in the projector. The paintings represent work over a period of some thousands of years. Men must have sat and looked at them while their flickering lamps made the great beasts seem to rear and plunge in a magic representation of the chase. The whole effect today in the clear and steady light of the concealed electric bulbs is of an intense feeling for animal life, and for the natural mysteries of birth and death—for many of the animals are pregnant, and many of them, transfixed with arrows, spears and javelins, are rearing in a last spasm of energy before they die. I tried to imagine the effect of entering this cave thirty feet below ground, treading the cool sand with bare feet, and of leaning forward, with a rush-lamp in one hand, while the other shades the eyes from the direct light of the flame, to stare at this procession of paintings on the walls, and now and then of peering up to see the images of the brown, red and black bodies painted on the ceiling above. The stranger animals, like the so-called 'Apocalyptic Beast' with its mottled body and long straight horns, have probably a daemon significance; others—bulls, horses, and stags with delicately traced antlers—are more familiar running figures. Some appear in huge close-ups, their profiles larger than life: others are no bigger than a man's hands put together. The vivid outlines reveal the closest observation of nature and a striking realism of style.

The word kinema means movement, and here is the natural, moving world of twenty-five to thirty thousand years ago, transfixed for us by these skilful painters of the Aurignacian period of the Old Stone Age. We left Lascaux, and tramped back down the rough wooded slope to the car. These caves leave a deep memory. They also give an almost frightening revelation of time. You know you have shared an intimate and complex artistic experience with a number of human ancestors whom one had never thought to be so human.

NEW BOOKS

Mr. READ

EDUCATION FOR PEACE

By Herbert Read. *Routledge and Kegan Paul.* 7s. 6d.

EXISTENTIALISM, MARXISM AND ANARCHISM

By Herbert Read. *Freedom Press.* 3s. 6d.

Reviewed by Leslie Paul

Herbert Read is one of the most stimulating of contemporary writers, and to whatever he tackles—and he tackles everything—he brings a fresh and eager mind. The range of his interests is shown by these two small collections of essays and addresses. *Education for Peace* consists of seven papers of unequal merit which together might be regarded as a footnote to *Education Through Art*; *Existentialism, Marxism and Anarchism* is made up of two papers, the title essay and a collection of jottings on the philosophy of freedom. However, they may conveniently be taken together as the same fundamental question is asked in both books—What are we to do with a sick society?

'Europe is materially bankrupted and mentally exhausted. We cannot escape the conclusion that the epoch which began with the Renaissance, and which, in spite of interruptions and sudden checks, has formed a coherent tradition for more than five centuries, is now at an end.' And it is not just war, or revolution; there is an invisible moral canker eating at the vitals of Europe and no 'rational reconstruction' can help to cure Europe of this—there has to be 'a new source of vitality, springing up within the body itself.' The new source, Herbert Read asserts, must be a moral one. We have to revive morality as a concept neither purely religious nor rationalistic and legal, but vital and creative. Read seeks for the redemption of Europe the moral creativity for which Berdyaev pleaded, but he colours it in his own way; he grounds it in the physical and aesthetic activities of man. And because he finds it can so be grounded, and because, as Plato saw, children can be educated for a life of physical grace, and obedience to Nature's harmonies, it is to the revitalisation of *education* that he looks for the power to move Society towards freedom and corporate communion. Of this theme, already illuminated in *Education Through Art*, he writes in support of a behaviourist conditioning in morality:

'The basis of morality is not in faith, nor in reason, but in a particular kind of discipline. Discipline is no mystery: it is a mechanism. The scientists call it a conditioned reflex . . . Human children can be conditioned even more easily than dogs . . . with infinitely subtler results.'

If that is so, then the crucial choice is the over-all pattern. Read does not want an ideological, but an aesthetic one. He follows Plato when he writes 'if only we bring up children in the contemplation of universal forms, in the practice of graceful and harmonious movements, in the active making of beautiful objects, then these children will instinctively recognise and choose goodness when they see it.' Read believes, in fact, that there is an aesthetic form of behaviour: the search for a morality is the search for *form*: the good is the beautiful.

It seems to me that at this point Herbert Read plunges his case into confusion. For if, of course, the child is 'conditioned' into a 'discipline' which is nothing but a 'mechanism', then, just as Pavlov's dogs automatically responded to the ringing of a bell, just so the child would automatically choose what his tutors or 'conditioners' had decided he should choose as good. The morally-conditioned child is neither morally free nor creative. The essence of moral choice is not to be found in the ready-made

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solution to the ready-made situation, but the free and responsible decision—after reflection—on a problem to which there is no cut-and-dried answer.

Just here, Read's own hard criticisms of contemporary education can be turned against him. 'Would it not be true to say that in general it [the child] is being rendered *inert* and *automatic*? It is being taught to sit still, to regularise its habits of eating and digestion, to formalise its speech, to conventionalise its behaviour in a hundred ways . . . We call the result discipline.'

Though constrained to admire some results which follow from formality and discipline, Read's artistic sense revolts from them and he pleads indeed for the opposite thing, for spontaneity. He follows Coleridge in asserting that the order or form in a work of art is not pre-fabricated and super-induced; in some sense it originates in the act of creation. The artist is obedient to an inner law and is the creator, not the discoverer, of form. Naturally, Herbert Read feels a pressing need to reconcile these conflicting views of his, and seeks to show, with some ingenuity, 'that creative freedom or spontaneity depends on unconscious discipline'—that from an inner self-discipline comes an outer freedom. But is 'conditioning' the creation of an *inner* discipline?—if it is not (and it seems to me to be the exact opposite of inner discipline), then we don't want it; we want freedom, and the whole argument for a new moral education or conditioning falls to the ground. But if there is to be no new moral education, how are we going to get 'Education for Peace'? The dilemma is never really faced because the author does not, in fact, seem aware of it, and continually shifts the ground of his own argument from side to side.

Herbert Read has been unlucky enough to get caught on the horns of a dilemma of anarchist manufacture. His own search for creativity and spontaneity is, in truth, a far different thing from the philosophical anarchism to which he constantly seeks to wed it. Historically, anarchism is not less materialist than Marxism; only its materialism is biological rather than economic, and Herbert Read writes always as one fundamentally seeking a way out of

the impasse of materialism. In *Existentialism, Marxism and Anarchism*, he writes that the anarchist 'rejects the philosophical nihilism of the existentialist. He just doesn't feel that *Angst*, that dreadful shipwreck on the confines of the universe, from which the existentialist reacts with despairful energy. He agrees with the Marxist that it is merely a modern myth. He draws in his metaphysical horns, and explores the world of nature. He again finds himself agreeing with the Leninist that life is a dialectical process, the end of which is the conquest of what Lukacs calls *la totalité humaine*, which, presumably, means a world dominated by human values.' Ah, there's the rub! The world is even at this moment 'dominated by human values'—has there ever been a time when it was more dominated by them?—and the world is sick with an invisible moral canker! We don't like the result of this domination, and no one has exposed the consequences of it more urgently than Herbert Read himself.

The anarchist, Read tells us, rejects the existentialism of Sartre; but he also rejects any transcendental values. 'I am not asking,' Read writes, 'the Socialist to accept any transcendental values, or anything more mystical than the physical structure of the universe and the natural processes of his own mind.' But he does ask him to struggle towards a moral virtue of which the pattern is in nature and for the type of mind which is able 'spontaneously to discriminate between good and evil.' It was Sartre who pointed out that, if God is dead, then there are no moral values, no codes of good and evil 'out there' written on the sky or in nature. No, if God is dead, we are free and forsaken, and alone with our decisions. It seems to me that the Sartre position compels everyone to a fundamental decision—either Sartre is right, or else there *is* something 'out there', a domain of spirit with which man's spirit is in communion and from which he draws not moral codes, but moral power. As an artist and poet, Read asks constantly for life lived in the freedom of the spirit. As a philosophical anarchist, he is constantly rejecting this for the gross materialism of Kropotkin, and so finds himself back in behaviourism. The shrinking from the spirit compels him to fall back on natural man as the source of morality and creation. And so at last he is weaponless against all the materialist forces destroying humanist and Christian Europe. It was Berdyaev who pointed out that humanity cannot be defended in nature, but only in the Divine. Man, Berdyaev said, makes little or no effort to hold on to his humanity save when God calls him to it. And even if the views of Berdyaev, so sympathetic to much in Herbert Read's thought, are finally rejected, there is no consolation to be found in orthodox anarchism. It was Kropotkin who wrote that, if the Anarchist is told that the life of man is unfolded according to the law of the Spirit, he turns with a shrug to his investigations of nature to show that life obeys physical laws. If Europe is dying of anything, it is dying of just that shrug.

PHASES OF ENGLISH POETRY

By Herbert Read. *Faber*. 10s. 6d.

Reviewed by Paul Bloomfield

Dr. Herbert Read's reprinted and amplified induction into English poetry, with its discursions into poetry in general, makes an attractive book. It stirs the imagination and provokes a suitable urge to argue. The arrangement is admirable. The judgments—why is Hardy only mentioned for what he did less than perfectly? But, perhaps this is a private grumble rather than criticism of a comparatively short essay.

Dr. Read's general thesis is that 'poetry has developed from the widest possible appeal . . . to the narrowest possible appeal, the poet appealing to himself alone.' Extremes seem to meet, and now that 'here we go round the mulberry bush' has become 'here we go round the prickly pear', it may be (the author hopefully says in his last chapter) that the poet of today will become 'the insidious inspirer of fresh communal poetry'.

Humanism, since it involved 'the

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perfection of humanity as an ideal', meant a break with the poetry of widest appeal; and so the ball was set rolling, and love and 'sentiment', religion and nature in turn claimed the poet's attention. But is there not also *pure* poetry? Dr. Read's seventh chapter is really the most fascinating in the book because it cuts across the chronological survey with a discussion of an element exciting in any 'phase'.

The best that life has to offer is a hint of something not to be found in the world at all . . . This is a free paraphrase of a sentence as mellifluous in French as it is awkward to translate word for word into English. '*Ce que la vie a de meilleur, c'est l'idée qu'elle nous donne de je ne sais quoi qui n'est point en elle.*' Anatole France did not pretend that it is poetry which gives us our most vivid intimations of this 'something'. Poetry has to share with music, if not also with painting, the honour of being the best medium for the communication of sublime ideas—forebodings of the Last Spring, when

> leaf and flower and falless fruit
> Shall hang together on the unyellowing bough . . .

And yet poetry has a peculiar privilege. Dealing in words, and words taken out of their prosaic order, it has special access to our self-consciousness, the Promethean and decisive characteristic in man. This is particularly true of 'pure' poetry, and there is a conscious savouring of the kind of lines which Dr. Read offers as specimens of this purity: once they have cast their spell on us, we start wondering in what their power lies, and though nobody should mind not coming to any fixed conclusion, our pleasure in them is a sophisticated one.

> *Le prince d'Aquitaine à la tour abolie . . .*
> Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came

. . . These are enchantments, and twice as effective if we are aware of being possessed by them.

We all know that to Pater 'purity' in any art meant approximating to 'the condition of music'. Dr. Read, having laid down that the three essentials of poetry are sound, sense and suggestion, attributes to *suggestion* the virtue of the lines quoted. I think he is nearer the mark than Pater, as well as wise to counterweigh his doubts about 'magic' by approving Fernand Gregh's

saying that '*la poésie pure a pour* hinterland *la poésie humaine.*'

The poetry of humanity! Very well; association could be made to explain a little of our emotional excitement about that prince of Aquitaine, so dramatically qualified by the qualification suffered by his tower, but why, except that we have in us *la poésie humaine*, should we feel concern about him . . . and about Childe Roland setting the slug-horn to his lips? The *concern* is the greater mystery; the lesser lies in the power of words to evoke it. Their influence in such cases as those in point seems to me to have little to do with Professor Gummere's 'cadence of consenting feet'—a phrase which has great allure for the foster-father of popular arts who divides Dr. Read's soul with an intellectual-aristocrat twin. Indeed, I believe that it is in reaction against the automatism of barbaric thumpings, feet or tom-toms, that the human spirit arrives at poetry. Ritual religion and ballad poetry can be beautiful, but they are no more than half-sisters of the religion and poetry of the spirit.

In an entertaining book on pure poetry, unnoticed by Dr. Read, George Moore affirmed that it was not suggestive poetry as such that was purest, but rather the kind which conjured up the most vivid pictures of something concretely happening, like the fluttering of the last red leaf in *Christabel*. My mention of the 'spirit' would have brought a sharp reprimand.

In short, Dr. Read's book is a faithful fulfilment of its title's promise and the well-chosen illustrative pieces amount to a stimulating anthology. As for a poet aiming to become 'the insidious inspirer of fresh communal poetry', it must be remembered that humanism, love, sentiment, religion, are all today both in and out of fashion. Didn't Shakespeare cater for all sorts and kinds? A born poet is always rare and, when he appears, he should be judged, as Heine said, by the standards he brings into the world with him.

Last March, an Overseas Edition of Picture Post *was substituted for the home edition for copies sent abroad. The subscription rate is £2 10s. per annum. For further details, please write to the Circulation Manager, Hulton Press, 43 Shoe Lane, London, E.C.4.*

THE WESTERN CRISIS

THE POWER AND LIMITS OF SCIENCE

By E. F. Caldin. *Chapman & Hall.* 12s. 6d.

THE CONCEPT OF DEITY

By E. O. James, D. LITT., PH.D., D.D. *Hutchinson's University Library.* 18s.

Reviewed by Kenneth Walker

The common denominator in these two very different books, and the excuse for reviewing them together, is that they both deal with the crisis through which Western thought is at present passing. The first book is written by a lecturer in Chemistry of Leeds University and the second by a Professor of the History and Philosophy of Religion in the University of London. Each writer approaches his subject from a very different angle and, strange to say, it is the scientist who writes with a disciplined zeal and the Doctor of Divinity who maintains throughout the whole of his book the cold impersonal attitude of the scientist.

I regard *The Power and Limits of Science* as a very important and opportune work. It is opportune because the achievements of the scientists during the last fifty years have been so spectacular that, whether they like it or not, they have become the arbiters of modern Western thought. This is due to a widespread misunderstanding of the place that science actually occupies in human culture. Blinded by their enthusiasm for 'scientific facts', laymen have forgotten that the scientific method can only be applied to a certain aspect of reality. It can find no answers to the questions that are of greatest importance to men, and the great majority of scientists are well aware of the limited nature of their knowledge. But some have been less honest than their colleagues and, starting from scientific data, they have reached illegitimate and utterly misleading conclusions on subjects which lie outside a scientist's purview. The result has been the rapid spread of a facile scientific materialism and the discounting of all spiritual values. Mr. Caldin is unusually well equipped for accomplishing

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the important task he has undertaken—that of enlightening the public on the scope of the scientific method. He has a good knowledge of philosophy, and points out very clearly the confusion of thought into which the worshippers of science have fallen. The scientific method is not, as so many people appear to believe, the sole, and perhaps not even the most important, method of arriving at truth. Nor can it provide data from which truths of a non-scientific nature can be derived. 'We cannot,' he writes, 'base metaphysics or ethics on the scientific method, nor on particular conclusions of science, though some have tried to do so. We cannot settle the nature and destiny of man by reference to science . . . although some have thought it possible.'

Philosophy, religion and art have also their places in human culture and what above all else is now required is a comparative study of all rational methods of apprehending truth. 'Work in this field has been piecemeal and scattered', and our intellectual malaise now cries out not only for clarity of thought but for synoptic views. Mr. Calvin has written not only an important and opportune, but a very stimulating, book.

The Concept of Deity contains much of the material used by the author in his Wilde Lectures in Natural and Comparative Religion given at Oxford. It is a scholarly book, the work of a writer who is not only a theologian, but also an eminent anthropologist. In it he studies the long and chequered history of the concept of Deity throughout the ages and in different parts of the earth. His book is primarily one for readers interested in the comparative study of religion. From the point of view of the general reader, its main defect is that it studies religion from without rather than from within, its symbolism and rituals and not the inner experiences of which these are outward expressions. But Dr. Wilde and not the author of this book are responsible for this limited approach to the subject of religion. As Dr. James points out in his preface, when he founded his lectureship, Dr. Wilde, like Lord Gifford, wished 'to further the empirical study of religion as a strictly natural science, without reliance upon any conception of revelation.' But it is upon inner experience that

religion is primarily based, and if these words mean that the inner experience of its great founders and teachers is not to be considered by Wilde lecturers, then their treatment of religion must necessarily be cramped. It is unnecessary to say that Dr. James has a very great knowledge of all the great world religions and his accounts of Buddhism and Hinduism are particularly good. No clearer or more impartial report could have been given of these two great religions, and as it is of the greatest importance at the present moment that the West should have a better understanding of the East, this is particularly fortunate.

SHAKESPEARE'S PROBLEM PLAYS

By E. M. W. Tillyard. *Chatto & Windus.* 8s. 6d.

Reviewed by Arthur Boyars

There is ample justification for publishing as a book these four Shakespearean studies, which were originally given as a series of lectures in 1948–9 at the University of Toronto. The title, however, is apt to be misleading, as Dr. Tillyard has in mind no strict definition like that of Mr. L. J. Potts —a view that the problem play treats the situations that arise in society simply as moral or political problems, in the abstract and without reference to the idiosyncrasies of human nature. Dr. Tillyard asks us to consider a parallel term—'problem child', and delves into the psychological differences between two types of this phenomenon; he compares *All's Well That Ends Well* and *Measure for Measure* to the genuinely abnormal child which has something 'radically schizophrenic' about it, and *Hamlet* and *Troilus and Cressida* to the other type which is full of interest and complexity, whose own schizophrenia is non-existent, since it is an attribute of their misjudging spectators. By thus altering the connotations of the term 'problem plays', Dr. Tillyard is able to include *Hamlet* among strange-seeming company; but he immediately justifies his use of the two categories by affirming that *Hamlet* and *Troilus* are problem plays 'because they deal with, and display, interesting problems: *All's Well* and *Measure for Measure* because they *are* problems.'

The connection is further secured by Dr. Tillyard's statement of the common features of all four plays: the spirit of gloom and disillusion, sometimes even of cynicism (though here Dr. Tillyard takes pains to show that no truly cynical conclusions have been reached by speculation), the preoccupation with questions of religious dogma and abstract speculation; the need to state spiritual problems and not be over-concerned with their solution. The plays also employ similar mechanisms; the technique of 'shock' is used to bring about a dynamic change affecting the adolescence of the principal male characters—Hamlet and Troilus to a greater extent, Bertram and Claudio to a lesser. In the five acts of a play they are all transformed by experiencing the intuitions which separate the child from the man, and if Hamlet does not quite become the tragic hero, it is because his regeneration is incomplete and the mechanics of the play have provided a tragic background of the wrong order. Night is the time and place for the hastened growth: the night Troilus witnesses Cressida's infidelity: the night of the performance of 'The Murder of Gonzago': Bertram's last night in Florence —the sudden urgency of events which is the climax of their doughy youth.

That *Measure for Measure* and *All's Well* both fail has been already noticed by Charles Williams who said of the one it was poetically 'an abandoned play', and of the other that Shakespeare's genius 'did not seem to be engaged.' True, the verse technique is inconsistent, as is also the level of invention. What is interesting about these plays is their use of folk element: Mr. W. W. Lawrence has pointed out, and Dr. Tillyard has enlarged on, certain factors in *All's Well*—the healing of the King leading to marriage and the fulfilment of seemingly impossible tasks, while in *Measure for Measure* the Duke's part derives from the old folk motive of the sovereign in disguise mixing with his people; the evasion of drama and use of ritual and cloudy incantation in Helena's conversation with the King (*All's Well*, Act II, scene iii), suggests the language of a miracle play, and Dr. Tillyard notices

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several *Morality* possibilities in this play as well as in *Measure for Measure* where the mixture of tones unfortunately hinders either an allegoric or totally realistic interpretation. Also in *Troilus*, and the effect of Lydgate's poem on the stylisation of the types which emerge from Pandarus' summing-up in Act III, scene ii.

But of prime importance is the observation on *Hamlet* and *Troilus and Cressida*, that they are plays in which the sheer wealth of the display counts for more than the lessons we learn from the way events are disposed. The show of such diversity of experience and reaction and the wealth of psychological revelation is presented in a way so as to exceed our objective view of the drama and dissolve its frame; and surely this feeling, quite simplified, was in Croce's mind when he wrote: 'He knows no other than the vigorous, passionate life upon earth, divided between joy and sorrow, with, around and above it, the shadow of a mystery?'

FERNAND LÉGER

By Douglas Cooper. *Lund, Humphries & Co.*
2 gns.

Reviewed by Felix H. Man

'Leger's art is an art of the people and for the people.' But it would be wrong to say that the people, so far, have given him his chance. For, although he is one of the cornerstones of what is called 'Modern Painting', Léger—until the recent Tate Exhibition at any rate—has been sadly neglected in this country, and Mr. Douglas Cooper's monograph must be welcomed because it is the first study of this great painter to appear in England.

London has always been hesitating towards Léger. While Berlin was showing the early Cubist as far back as 1913, London had to wait another seventeen years to make the acquaintance of the French master. But now, as a compensation, we have the book, and an exhibition showing his life's work, which follows immediately on the big French exhibition at the Musée de l'Art Moderne in Paris.

Although Mr. Cooper came to know Léger's art only twenty years ago, he has become the most ardent apostle of his work, which he analyses in several chapters of his book. It is to Mr. Cooper's credit that he measures the achievements of Léger with the right and correct method, and does not make the mistake of comparing Léger with his contemporaries, Braque, Picasso, or the late Juan Gris. Such comparisons, though always tempting, are not of much value as they are little more than a matter of personal taste.

The book was originally published last year in France. It was then unbound and had a more pleasing stiff paper cover, which allowed each page to be perfectly seen. In the bound English edition, many pages are unfortunately stuck together in the centre. But the volume contains a number of well-produced and well-chosen plates in full colour, and innumerable good reproductions in half-tone. The whole of the text is printed in French, but only three chapters are translated into English. The monograph, therefore, is somewhat curious. It starts with Chapter II, and carries the following explanation from the author: 'It seemed to me superfluous to translate Chapter I which is a frankly personal evocation of the artist and his milieu.'

It is difficult to follow Mr. Cooper at this point. If the reader understands French, he needs no translation at all. If, on the other hand, he does not, then why withhold part of the text? Or, if the author regards Chapter I as unimportant, why print it at all?

In a monograph of this type, personal remarks about an artist's milieu are always helpful for an understanding of his personality. They are to a certain extent a venture into journalism, and it would have been illuminating if Mr. Cooper had gone still further in his description of Léger's workshop. For instance, the artist has been working in this studio since 1913—that is, before the First World War, and everything has been left unchanged for the past thirty-seven years. There is still no electric light, and Léger still uses an oil lamp during the dark winter evenings when he wants to draw at his desk. This surprising aversion against modern comfort by the painter of the 'Modern Machine Age' is not made sufficiently clear in Mr. Cooper's book. Nor is he concerned at all with Léger's dislike of the American paradise of mechanism.

A number of photographs are included in this section—four are old and interesting but the new ones (especially the one in the film-star manner from New York), with the exception of Brassai's photo, are of poor quality. They convey nothing of Léger's personality, and bear no relationship to the artist and his work.

ILEX AND OLIVE

By Michael Swan. *Home and Van Thal.* 16s.

Reviewed by Wrey Gardiner

This book has so many faults that it could easily be a reviewer's Aunt Sally. It begins with a singularly naïve account of an evening in Paris. Mr. Swan did not contrive to have such an interesting time as Somerset Maugham's young man in *Christmas Holiday*. But he is soon in Avignon, that first halt on the road to the south. And he knows the virtue of arriving in a beautiful city at dawn. Here he disappoints though, agreeing with his master Henry James in disliking the Palace of the Popes. But did he see it in the strange light of a thunder-storm from the other side of the Rhône, or even by the more vulgar moonlight, when it shows its massive greatness, a dominating vision of white walls covering an immense area of ground? He never mentions the broken bridge, the old Pont d'Avignon, best seen from the Palace gardens in the fading light of a summer evening. It is a pity that he says no word of Arles, unlike his hero, Henry James, who made himself footsore on its old cobbles. In fact, the first part of the book appears hastily put together and not to belong to the second, where we are brought up sharp against an article on Palladian architecture that looks as if it had been meant for an art journal. Then we are pitchforked into a world of odd characters suitable to a novel by Cyril Connolly or Aldous Huxley. He writes well about Venice, though it is difficult not to write well about Venice. Here we are in a part of the world in which

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Mr. Swan really lets himself go. He improves, as most of us do, as we go further south, though it is perhaps a pity that he mixes every kind of writing from prefaces from other books to letters, journals, history, anecdote, and the higher art criticism. But he will be forgiven many things for his chapter on Capri, perhaps the best thing in the book.

There is something in the blood of an Englishman which turns to water when he has to make the decision to return to his fog-bound island in the north. Perhaps it is the ghost of the old Roman spirit which must linger in some of us. Mr. Swan should have stopped here. His code is an anti-climax unredeemed by an interesting discussion on the current theme as to whether the writer should be a political polemicist or an escapist, the Anglo-Saxon sense of responsibility to something, the puritannical tyranny that produced so much of the bad poetry of the thirties. Fortunately he comes unrepentantly down on the right side. But it is easy to pick holes in this jumbled account of peregrinations in that beautiful country whose image has been impressed on so many generations of travellers, and there emerges from its pages a more lovable character, perhaps, than is to be found behind the smoother hallucination of a more practised art, as well as a lot of good writing that seizes the heart with the faster beat of nostalgia for lost paradises. If he will discipline his pages, he will write a great travel book, our bright gleam of hope in a gloomy world of daily bread.

A VOICE THROUGH A CLOUD

By Denton Welch. *John Lehmann.* 10s. 6d.

Reviewed by Alan Ross

Denton Welch's autobiographical trilogy—*Maiden Voyage*, *In Youth is Pleasure*, and now his posthumous *A Voice Through a Cloud*, combined with the stories collected under the title of *Brave and Cruel*—struck out almost embarrassingly frankly at familiar territory and then particularised it so completely that his method has seemed in danger of becoming a convention. It was a manner of writing that, from a static, blind present, recreated in over-life size the

violently-felt sensations and failures of adolescence. A searchlight of great intensity played over a lost landscape that was a mere thickening of darkness; but under its rays dead ground was revitalised with luminous flowers; empty rooms were re-furnished to the last fastidious detail; severed relationships recreated, as if life was a three-dimensional film that could be run backwards and by a poetic act of memory made living. But behind the searchlight there was a kind of contemporary immobility. The battery recharged itself through the imagination, exercised only on the past. The foreword by Denton Welch's friend, Eric Oliver, to this not quite finished book explains some of the reasons for this static, retrospective assemblage of youth and adolescence; it is as if Welch, by bringing his life painfully and completely up to date, up to and beyond its breaking point, was trying to make the wooden soldier real and give it a human future. But the attempt in human terms just failed and *A Voice Through a Cloud* is a chapter or two short. 'He had suffered,' Mr. Oliver writes, 'thirteen years of chronic and painful illness caused by a road accident in which he sustained a serious fracture of the spine . . . in the last few months of his life he was being given morphia to alleviate the constant pain. Still he worked on, though the effort to do so gave him a high temperature and he would have to lie on his bed blindfolded without moving. Towards the end he could work for only three or four minutes at a time and then he would get a raging headache and his eyes would more or less give out. Complication after complication set in, and the left side of his heart started failing. Even then, he made colossal and nearly successful efforts to finish the book.'

It was in these circumstances that *A Voice Through a Cloud*, the record of his accident and long period of hospitals and nursing-home convalescence thirteen years earlier, was written. It is a triumphant book, not because of the suffering whose exotic fruit it was, but because of the qualities that suffering radiated and which were turned into prose of a rare though hot-house perfection. 'What was my life?' Welch wrote. 'It was all a scraping together of little incidents, a sucking of them dry before I hurried on in search of one more drop of nectar.' It was a vacillation between despair, 'the black bog of nothingness', and a 'tingling gaiety, the impatience for every smell and taste and sound'. Again, 'Would the colours and the images never stop forming?' The heightened awareness, the compulsive fantasy, the razor-edge balancing between the surgical landscapes of fever and reality that are part of sickness; the seizing on detail and the dramatisation of relationships to a degree in which everyday ritual acquires the properties of myth and every exchange of conversation the surcharged vagaries of innuendo—these Welch wove into a pattern of hospital wards, treatments, visits and doctor-fixations, but, developed in the lens of his mind, they became flints that struck an imagery as wild, rich and luxuriant as tropical vegetation. There is a cool, light spaciousness about Welch's prose that acts as a kind of glass-case for the curios of his visual imagination. Welch writes very much as a painter—it is possible to believe that, but for his accident, he might never have turned seriously to writing; certain also that he became a writer of much greater stature than the rather self-conscious decorativeness of his paintings suggest he would have been as a painter—and it is this intense visual virtuosity, combined with great frankness, eye for character and feeling for emotional undertones, that takes his writing far beyond the sensitive or purely clinical. Despite its subject, *A Voice Through a Cloud* is not a depressing book. It is sad, certainly; but it is also funny, and it is both these in tragic and heroic proportions. The Welch protagonist, 'I', the author, the hero, is, like most of the heroes of our time, cast in the mould of the anti-hero or victim. He endures, rather than acts; but he endures critically and creatively. The healthy extrovert writer is able to rationalise and impose order on the associative images of his sub-conscious. The life around him, the currents of his time, provide him with a theme outside himself. Denton Welch, unlike for instance George Orwell, was denied this by his youth and the amputation of his experience. The

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strange, almost surrealist automatism of his imagination, lively as his body was unable to be, became the lightning-conductor for sensation that was valued for its own sake. Welch had the poet's ability to see things in terms of other things. It makes his prose a rich, exciting tapestry of feeling, a varying barometer of vivid, secret pressures.

There are still note-books, poems, letters, and sketches, which, one hopes, will be edited and published while Welch is still fresh in the memory. When they are, it will be possible to see him in his entirety, an artist essentially personal and different, but of a quality with Mark Gertler, Christopher Wood, Rex Whistler, Christopher Caudwell, Sidney Keyes, Alun Lewis, part of a doomed tradition that runs like a raised scar, disfiguring, stunting, yet illumining the face of our time.

NEW NOVELS

JEAN BAROIS

By Roger Martin Du Gard (translated by Stuart Gilbert). *The Bodley Head.* 12s. 6d.

THE OUTER EDGES

By Charles Jackson. *Peter Nevill.* 8s. 6d.

Reviewed by Olivia Manning

Neither of these novels is of the first order, but each, despite the fact nearly half a century separates their original publication, is peculiarly representative of its country of origin. The long, solid French semi-classic deals with that perennial French theme—the Catholic's struggle against Doubt. The American novel, needless to say, deals with Murder. M. Du Gard's work is clearly the product of a mature culture; Mr. Jackson's belongs to the infantile, degenerate society it sets out to criticise.

Jean Barois, written before the First World War and only now translated into English, is in dialogue, its brief descriptive passages given in the present tense like stage directions. As much of this dialogue is of a classical severity, the effect produced

is often less that of a novel than of a philosophical discourse. The result is somewhat bloodless and over-intellectual, especially in the early passages when the boy Jean, son of a free-thinking doctor but brought up by a religious grandmother, passes through the phase that leads to his loss of faith. In his arguments with the priests, we follow his intellectual struggle but seldom feel the emotional upheaval that accompanies it. We are not much moved by Jean's progress as he separates from his religious little wife, throws up his lectureship and becomes editor of the rationalist periodical, *The Sower*, but when we touch upon the Dreyfus case, a new brilliance and passion comes into the book. The scene of the trial of Zola, when the dialogue method permits of direct court reporting, is the book's peak. There are few readers who will not be swept away by the selflessness and determination of the handful of rationalists who, resisting the full force of the mob led by the French general staff, threw all they had into the fight for justice for an obscure and unpopular Jew. We are reminded of how long this fight dragged on (the first Dreyfus trial was in 1896; his pardon was not obtained until the end of 1899), and of the persecution and periods of despair these Dreyfus partisans had to suffer. Here the whole period flashes into life for us. We see Zola driven back by the mob as he tries to leave the court—bareheaded, very pale, the lids of his short-sighted, ferrety eyes half closed, his pince-nez lost in the scuffle, his lips set in a hard line, his gaze shifting uneasily from side to side; Dreyfus, sickly, worn out by his years on Devil's Island, scarcely fit to lend support to his own cause; and the consumptive Esterhazy with his 'pronounced stoop, a sallow complexion with red patches over the cheek-bones, and restless, feverish eyes'. The whole centre of the book is lit by the great period of national excitement which it covers, but, with Dreyfus pardoned, the vitality is gone again and we return to the somewhat bleak question of Jean's faith, which he now gradually recovers. The author treats this conversion without sentiment. Whether it results from a true revelation of man's immortality, or merely from the fear of extinction in death, is a question that each reader will answer to his own satisfaction. Even reposing on the bosom of the Catholic church, Jean does not make a very good end. His last words express a fear of hell's fire, and one feels that the author himself prefers the rationalist Luce who dies unshaken in his materialism.

Those who have cornered the question of faith over here make it easy for us either with the jam of humour, as does Mr. Evelyn Waugh, or the 'blood and tears' drama of Mr. Graham Greene's murders and dark nights of the soul. M. Du Gard offers none of those things, but a somewhat sombre exposition of doubt that few will find easy reading.

The new novel of Mr. Charles Jackson, author of *The Lost Week-end*, is, on the other hand, so easy that one often feels no need to go on reading it at all. Any average reader could put the book down in mid-stream and finish it off for himself; indeed, he would be likely to get further by doing that than by following Mr. Jackson to the end. This is not to say the author has not set out with the most serious intentions. He professes to castigate the society of modern America—a society secure from the doubts of M. Du Gard's hero, because what faith it has is static and comprises either the revivalist sex jamboree or the silent tear that falls at the sight of Mr. Bing Crosby in holy orders—but he does so in the most materially profitable manner by pandering to its taste for the slick, sentimental, horrific and bogus profound. As a proem, he quotes from Plutarch: 'Geographers crowd into the outer edges of their maps the parts of the world which they know nothing about', adding a note, 'What lies beyond is sandy desert full of wild beasts', or 'blind marsh', or 'Scythian cold', or 'frozen sea'. In this novel, dealing with the outer edges of the human mind, we do not explore the motives for the revolting rape, mutilation and murder of two little girls, nor are we made to understand the condition that turns this amusing degenerate into such a murderer. Here, as on the ancient maps, the unknown region is marked 'Scythian cold' and left a titillating mystery. Instead, we do a roundabout journey over those well-worn paths

of the modern novel—the frustrated wife seeking a lover; the unfaithful husband dissatisfied by his mistress and wishing the return of his wife and child; gossip; the futility of everyday suburban life; the naughtiness of children's minds and other adventurings into the nearer reaches of Freudianism. The blurb tells us that the novel's purpose is to show how the lives of other people are affected by a murder, but the novel in its superficiality does not make its point. The book lacks impetus; it seems never to get underway, and at the end the reader is left with a flat sense of disappointment, like someone who, promised a trip to the moon, has been fobbed off with a ride round the old home town.

THE SOVIET AIR FORCE

By Asher Lee. *Gerald Duckworth.* 8s. 6d.

Reviewed by John Stroud

This is a little book of only two hundred pages but, in spite of its size, it contains more information on the history and the organisation of Soviet military aviation than can be found gathered elsewhere in one work.

Asher Lee was an Air Ministry Intelligence Officer, but it is fairly obvious from reading his new book that much of his information came from other sources, some of which, unfortunately, were not a hundred per cent accurate. Beginning with some details of the birth of Soviet aviation and the organisation of the Soviet Air Force, Asher Lee deals with training, the Soviet aircraft industry, airborne troops, a general survey of the air force during the 1941–45 war, a chapter on Soviet long-range bombers, and he ends with a chapter entitled 'What now?'

The overall picture shows how the U.S.S.R. began, largely by using help from outside, both by the use of actual foreign aircraft and engines, and by design work undertaken by experienced foreigners within the U.S.S.R. Considering the vast difficulties, progress was fairly rapid, so that towards the latter stages of the war many Soviet military aircraft were equal to those of both the Soviet enemies and allies.

Although in action the Soviet Air Force gave a good account of itself, Asher Lee is at pains to point out that this weapon was never really tried to its full extent. The British and American Air Forces kept a large percentage of the Luftwaffe's strength in the Western theatre and in the Mediterranean. Germany's best piston-engined fighters were not used on a large scale on the Eastern front, and the Soviet Air Force was never called on to meet determined opposition from modern jet-propelled aircraft. Equally, the Soviet bomber forces obtained little experience of long or even medium-range bombing for a number of reasons, which included the lack of advanced bombers, the vast bombing effort of Britain and America which made Soviet strategic bombing largely unnecessary, and also the depletion from time to time of the Soviet bomber force for other duties.

The Soviet Air Force is a useful textbook. It gives background to the present Soviet air weapon and it also acquaints its readers with many of the personalities of Soviet military aviation who are largely unknown in the West.

The history of the Soviet aircraft industry appears to have repeated itself, for just as in the beginning it looked to the outside, so now the U.S.S.R. has received great help from Germany in the new era of jet-propelled aircraft, guided missiles and radar. Many of Germany's very advanced aircraft, gas turbines and missile designs were captured by the U.S.S.R. In the design of heavy long-range bombers, the U.S.A. has helped by accident. Some B–29 Superfortresses force-landed in Soviet territory, and the present Soviet heavy bombers bear more than a slight resemblance to that type.

Asher Lee's account makes it clear that the Soviet Air Force has taken its place as one of the great air forces of the world, although at this time it still has much to achieve in many aspects.

I should like to have seen more and better illustrations in this book and also consistency in the designations of the aircraft mentioned.

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